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"Ethnic" and Fantasy: Exploring Responsibility, Respect, and Integrity in the Design of Culturally Significant Costume for Theatre

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“Ethnic” and Fantasy:
Exploring Responsibility, Respect, and Integrity in the Design of Culturally Significant Costume for Theatre

by

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Dedication

I am sitting down to conclude this research amid a global pandemic that has drawn xenophobia toward people of Asian and particularly Chinese descent out of the American people. From where I am sitting, I can see that my research is flawed. It is a first attempt, an initial pass, at understanding a bevy of difficult concepts and the weight of thousands of years of history. I will look back years from now, with much more experience in these matters, and blush at the puzzle pieces I missed or put in the wrong place. But I will not apologize for making the attempt. Watching our president encourage racism in the face of a public health crisis that threatens the entire world epitomizes my reasons for pursuing this project. Amid nearly nationwide Stay-at-Home orders, theatres are closed right now. This terrifies me, because theatres are a space wherein we build community, broaden understanding, and learn to celebrate our differences while finding common ground. I have begun my own journey of understanding now so that when performances return to the stage and regain their audiences, I will be better equipped to foster understanding across perceived barriers. This thesis is dedicated to the people who are doing their part around the world to slow the spread of this horrific virus so that people can eventually return to work, performances can return to the stage, and all of us can see in each other a little bit more humanity than we might have before.

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Lastly, my family and friends from elsewhere have made it possible for me to finish out this year proudly. Mom, Dad, Anne, Michael, Adam, Ian, Holden, Nick, and Vinnie, every text, every card, every voicemail, every 32 oz. bag of coffee has been integral to this process, and there are no words to express how much I've cherished them.

Abstract

"Ethnic" and Fantasy: Exploring Responsibility, Respect, and Integrity in the Design of Culturally Significant Costume for Theatre

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Costume designers must acquire the knowledge and flexibility to understand characters and clothing from diverse cultural backgrounds. This project explores the responsibilities of a costume designer in creating work relating to cultural backgrounds that are not the designer's own. It seeks to define important academic terms that are not directly a part of costume design research, but form a basis for interrogation of the costume design process for potentially sensitive cultural material. An extensive literature review was conducted first, creating a broad backdrop of knowledge that could be applied to a design process. Using Cinderella stories from China, Japan, and Korea as a vehicle for the investigation, this study examines one designer's process of designing one character whose qualities remain similar across much of the world, but whose clothing must change depending on story origins. Extensive research was conducted into the clothing for each of the originating cultures, and the designer used this new knowledge along with new understandings of how to engage with culturally significant material to

design the “transformation” look for the various Cinderella characters. The study concludes with reflections regarding integrity, understanding, and the importance of engaging with diverse cultural material as a way of building community across the globe.

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Chapter One: Introduction

In broad terms, a costume designer's job is to bring a character to life through the clothing they wear. Often, an audience sees a character before hearing them speak, giving garments increased weight in the construction of character. This is true in street clothing as well – we form judgments about people passing on the street based on their clothing, and may never interact with any other part of their personality. When this occurs casually on the street, rather than in a theatrical space, clothing possesses power to define identity.

Identity is deeply mixed up in contemporary theatre practice: as the subject of plays, the basis for criticism, a part of many theatre artists' individual practice as members of a collaborative team. The lines between how this evaluation happens within or outside theatrical space are incredibly blurry, because most Western theatre in recent centuries has been steeped in realism and an effort to express universal truths on stage. I began to realize the implications of my identity in the work of costume design long before I started graduate school, as I keyed into conversations about diversity in casting and on production teams, read criticisms of fashion designers' appropriation of cultural motifs and garments in their collections, and listened as a debate began to form around who has the right to tell which stories. Just before beginning graduate school, I stitched on a production of Madame Butterfly and wondered aloud with my coworkers, "does hiring a Japanese designer 'fix' the problems in this story? Does it protect us (the company, the director, the makers involved) from mistakes made along the way?"

My time at UT Austin has solidified my interest in this question. I've talked in circles with my colleagues about how our various identity coordinates inform and sometimes blind our work. In my first few weeks of this program I attended a town hall called by concerned students

to discuss the centering of white experience in a play that really should have engaged the Latinx people it only spoke *about*. I designed a production of Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* for a class and could have researched for weeks and not been satisfied; two years later, I had the same experience with *Sweat*. I clothed a cast of mostly Latinx students performing an American musical based on a 19th century German play, and wondered, do they think about how their identities differ from their characters'? I watched a scene be cut from *The Drowsy Chaperone* because of its overt use of stereotype as a device for parody, and thought, is there any way for me to do this right? As a white, American, middle class woman, trained mostly in Shakespeare and Ibsen and classic musical theatre, is there any hope that I can tell more diverse stories without screwing it up?

This project grew out of a seed planted by these anxieties and a belief that theatre is useful because of its ability to broaden people's experience of humanity, rather than reinforce what an audience already understands to be true. I want to tell stories onstage that are much different from my own. Traditionally, for me, this has manifested as an obsession with the past, and I have spent countless hours educating myself in Western fashion history for various productions and out of my own curiosity. Trends (or a steadfast rejection of progress) in American theatre reinforce a need for me to know this history well, and as it is a large project to gain facility with all of Western fashion history, even now my endeavors are far from finished. But all of this time spent learning such a limited point of view means that I am missing knowledge of most of the world's clothing, regardless of time period.

The histories of Asian, African, Native American, South American, and many others' clothing are barely touched on in fashion history classes, and usually are not considered part of fashion at all, but rather part of "national dress" or "ethnic dress" or "traditional clothing."

Because of this, these traditions are particularly prone to stereotype when they are used theatrically. In some cases, there is a glossing over of specificity in design - the title of this paper, *"Ethnic" and Fantasy*, comes from a section I have seen in many costume storage spaces, which lumps most of the world into a category of not only otherness, but non-reality. This generic labeling removes a tremendous amount of distinctive and specific detail from the conversation. Sources like ethnographic photographs, staged by European or American photographers, obscure reality and make nuance difficult to glean. Often the clothing in these photographs is removed and altered from its actual context, making what would seem a primary source rather subjective after all (fig. 1). This is where a base knowledge of a particular context becomes essential. Many American costume designers can look at a single Victorian fashion plate or photograph and determine a wealth of information about occasion, location (indoors or out), time of day, time of year and year in history for which those garments are appropriate (fig. 2). I doubt how many could do the same from a photograph of a 19th century Native American subject or a drawing from a kimono catalog. I know I could not. Thus, unless there are time, energy, and resources for the required research, sometimes a stereotype makes it to the stage in place of a carefully considered, character- and story-specific, culturally rich costume.

The primary question this thesis seeks to address is this: what are my responsibilities as a costume designer when creating clothing designs for characters located in cultural contexts outside my own experience? Followed by, what is the process for creating these designs and does it differ from my usual costume design process? How does engaging with this process serve to disrupt my own notions of process and perhaps serve me as an artist and perpetual student of the world? In the research project, I have designed three different versions of roughly the same character, from stories originating in China, Korea, and Japan. According to the Aarne-

Thompson-Uther (ATU) folktale classification system, the stories all fall into the ATU 510 tale type, "persecuted heroine" (or Cinderella) stories. The French version of this tale, penned in 1697 by Charles Perrault, is widely familiar in America and often used as a metonym for transformation stories in general. I chose this tale type based on the number of variants available

Figure 1. Photograph of Anna Chapman, a Cayuse woman, by Major Lee Moorhouse, 1900.

> Moorhouse used this exact dress and hat in a photograph of Rosa Paul, a Wallawalla. This points to the unreliability of photographs on their own – photographers have a point of view and the ability to manipulate the presentation of their subjects just as any other artists do.

Figure 2. Unidentified young woman, confirmed in Iowa, ca. 1900.

Though this woman is unidentified, and the only information I have about this photograph is the state and year in which it was taken, I can derive a lot of information from it because of the extensive background I already have in European and American clothing of this time.

(I've heard it said that nearly every culture has one, though further research contests this claim) and its embedded and familiar use of a clothing object as an important identifier of character. The function of the "glass slipper" or other identifying clothing object in most versions of the story reinforces the claim that clothing is almost universally used to create and interpret identity.

In order to hone in on the specifics of the three cultures I chose and navigate the issues of cultural ownership, appropriation, representation, and identity involved, my research began with a sweeping overview of terms and concepts across many fields. "Fashion" and "dress" are notoriously difficult to pin down because they touch on so many different fields – anthropology, psychology, sociology, history, economics – all, along with clothing, are distinctly human in nature. Thus, my literature review (Chapter Three) pulls from diverse and varied fields and applies concepts from these fields to the specific questions at hand. Once I felt that those concepts had been sufficiently addressed, I went on to research deeply into three cultures about which I knew nothing, starting as far away from their clothing history as religion and philosophy, to get a handle on how "persecuted heroine" stories might have functioned in these societies, before addressing clothing history and how it impacts culture today. What I came up with is a tangled web of overlapping subject matter, colonization, trade, inspiration, and globalization, that I will attempt to detangle through the course of this paper. None of the results are simple, but I hope that they reflect rigorous investigation, show deep investment in the topic, and serve to stimulate dialogue among designers regarding integrity in cultural depictions and how our own identities might serve or hinder us in our work.

The second chapter of this paper outlines the methodology I used to complete the research project, from literature review and cultural research to finally designing and making the garments in question. Chapter Three details the literature review, connecting concepts from a

range of fields to my work as a costume designer. It guides the reader through challenging ideas that at first glance, seem outside the realm or concern of theatrical design and performance. However, as theatrical work most often interacts with human life, it can be assumed to be complex and touch on a variety of social and cultural concerns. There was an enormous learning curve for me in addressing these topics, and in this chapter I attempt to abridge the reading I have done in a way that is accessible to readers and grounded in its connection to my work. Chapter Four summarizes each of the persecuted heroine stories used as a framework for my design process, and discusses how I used cultural research and the story texts to make decisions about the title character's costume design. Finally, Chapter Five draws conclusions about my relationship to my own design process and the greater significance of this work to the field and the world.

Chapter Two: Methodology

Having never defined a research methodology for a project before, this was a daunting undertaking. This chapter reflects on the process of "becoming" that the project underwent before it was really started, when I clutched the seed of an idea but was not really sure how to make it research. It outlines the stages and types of investigation required to make this a reality, so that the reader may step inside my process as each chapter dives deeper. In the first section, Chapter Two also justifies the use of Persecuted Heroine folk tales as story source material, and substantiates my determination to actually make the garments in question, rather than stop short at rendering the design in two dimensions. The second section briefly acknowledges noteworthy limitations of the project, which necessarily strays from typical theatrical process in some consequential ways.

PROCESS

My personal journey to defining a methodology for my research project was a rocky one. I knew what my questions were, knew what I wanted to do to explore them and how I wanted to do it, but every time I sought to define these steps in terms of academic research I felt that the project somehow fell short. It wasn't until I had completed most of the literature review and a few other pieces of the research that I really understood what I was undertaking.

"Ethnic" and Fantasy, the project, consists of an extensive literature review and three case studies. The literature review is important because the type of research I typically do for theatrical production primarily falls into this category. This was the most comfortable part of the project for me – locating sources and wringing from them as much knowledge as each could offer. Within this, there were three stages: first, I navigated and analyzed sources from a wide variety of fields, in order to gain a deeper understanding of terms and concepts that I knew would play an important role in my research process and writing. Sources from performance studies,

film, anthropology, fashion, and design all became a part of my vocabulary through this reading. Through annotated bibliographies and defining key terms, I crafted a framework for moving forward with my design work and a sense of what felt most important to me in terms of the process. It is significant to note that only one source I used was actually written about costume design – there is so little academic research that specifically addresses the process of costume design and how it relates to story, audience, body, and other elements of design, that I had to synthesize research from many other areas in order to build this project.

While completing this general review, I also read hundreds of Persecuted Heroine (Cinderella, or ATU 510A) stories and chose which ones I intended to focus on. Initially, I had thought I would research seven from different parts of the world. Later, realizing that time was certainly limited and that I wanted to be thorough in each of my processes, I narrowed my research to three for the purposes of this project. I chose stories from China, Korea, and Japan, locations that are geographically close but have much different approaches to the Persecuted Heroine story. (Initially, I had also included India, but ran into difficulties with the structure of the story, the region it came from, and the implications of unstitched garments as part of my ultimate goal to create a garment in half scale). Asia is a part of the world with rich clothing history, about which I knew almost nothing before embarking on this research project. By choosing locations that share some elements of aesthetics and history, I hoped that I would be able to develop an eye for similarities and differences among clothing details in this region, the same way I can follow shifts and differentiate between decades in Western fashion. It was also important that in these stories, the main character have an opportunity for a "discovery" garment – an extraordinary or recognizable or detailed ensemble that she is wearing when a potential husband notices her – because that garment was the focus of my interest. In the French version of

Cinderella, the one best known by Western audiences in general, this garment is a ball gown provided by a fairy godmother. It indicates a transformation, from ill treatment and servitude to grace and nobility. The ball gown affords Cinderella the opportunity to define her own place in society, to become upwardly mobile and to fulfill a fantasy she hardly dared to have. There were many things about the garment of transformation that interested me. This garment, in any culture, is necessarily tied to identity. Cinderella literally puts on a new identity when she dons a ball gown and glass slippers. She becomes a woman of wealth, nobility, society, and mystery. Her wish for this garment, and to attend the associated event, speaks to societal values. In many ways, this story proves that clothing is an important factor in expressing identity to the world outside oneself, and solidifies the importance of deep research into the clothing of another culture before utilizing it in my own work. Cinderella herself justified the significance of this project.

The third stage of this literature review was to deeply investigate the existing canon of books, websites, articles, and videos relating to clothing from each of these countries. Not all of this research was academic in nature – before I cut India from the project, I watched YouTube videos about various ways of pleating and tying saris according to region and occasion. Later I did the same to explore kimono dressing and obi tying. This part of the process was somewhat more typical of my usual costume design process, with one glaring difference: I read a lot more books. I quickly discovered that in the realm of Asian traditional and historical clothing, it was not enough for me to glance at photos and illustrations to discern the nuances, as I now can with most Western silhouettes. The differences are subtle, and in some cases, the symbolism complex. At first only engaging with images and small captions, I felt overwhelmed. The panic crept back in that perhaps I should not be attempting this project. When I began to read, however, I found

an entirely new world of exploration. This stage of literature review developed into three Persecuted Heroine case studies.

The goal of each case study was to design the "transformation" garment for each of the heroines, and collaborate with costume technicians to build them in half scale. As it turns out, this is where the real research happened – at first I was not sure how to justify the actual construction of these garments, particularly in a context that removed the body from the equation. Luckily, my literature review provided an answer. Lindström and Ståhl's "Patchworking Ways of Knowing and Making" addresses the difficulty of placing design related research and work in neat little boxes of qualitative or quantitative design. The authors describe "patchworking" as "concretely taking what is at hand and putting it into new relations…not only the making of a textile object, but the collective making of a patchwork of different kinds of knowledges, experiences, histories and anticipations" (65). The work described is unique in its process – the initial "problem" is allowed to undergo unlimited re-articulation, creating a method that is constantly "in-the-making" (67). Lindström and Ståhl emphasize that rather than attempting to find a particular truth, their work aims to "make difference differently…to engage and intervene in materialities, temporalities, knowledges, and more that already exist" (71). This suggests an inductive and flexible approach to research that uses what is there already to discover what is not – yet.

This essay outlined for me an academic justification for one of the ways I had already been thinking about my thesis project. Through making, I have learned a considerable amount about theatrical costuming and costume history, drawing on the knowledge of colleagues and tradition to create new garments. Lindström and Ståhl propose a similar process as a methodology, which applied directly to my desire to not only design but also create the garments

for my project. “Patchworking” describes, with layers of textile relevance, a way of organizing my project that relates more closely to the culture of a costume shop than any more traditional research method I had encountered. The concept of patchworking also allows for the kind of multiplicity that this research project requires – there was never going to be one definitive, correct answer at the end of it, but more realistically, a series of thoughts, a conglomeration of ideas, a range of impressions that can be applied in various configurations to future projects, depending on need. Thus my methodology relies on an inductive, qualitative, and patchworked approach within each case study.

In order to analyze the success of my project, I have relied on two metrics – have I gained insight into my own costume design process that I can apply to future endeavors? And, was I able to encourage other designers, makers, creative thinkers, artists around me to think about their own processes in a new light? I hope that this project is only a jumping off point for further exploration. By focusing on only three countries in one large region of the world, I did not meet the initial goal I had of a world overview, but instead I made significant gains in a particular blind spot in my knowledge and worked to establish awareness and curiosity that will translate to future projects.

LIMITATIONS

Due to limitations of scope, there are elements related to this study that I have had to set aside for the purposes of this research. First and foremost, I have largely set aside considerations regarding the body. Only the hanbok has been built to full scale for a specific person’s body, while the kimono and hanfu are built in half scale on a size 6 form. There are a few reasons for this. First, in theatrical contexts, the body is never determined by the costume designer. Casting occurs at some stage of the process before or usually after final designs are due, and costume

designers adjust those designs to suit the body of the performer during the fitting process. Body is a huge consideration for costume designers. The relationship of clothing to body to character to identity is always a challenging piece of the design puzzle that should not be undervalued. Many conversations about representation in theatre center around the body of the performer – is the ethnic background of the actor's body appropriate for presenting the material of a given project? This is a decision made outside of design conversations. This study assumes that the answer is yes, while recognizing that sometimes the answer is no, and the costume designer then faces new challenges in how to create character onstage responsibly.

Another part of a theatrical process that is not addressed in this research is the collaboration with a director and other creative voices in a production process. Since this investigation prioritizes my own process of designing costumes, including other voices would have complicated the analysis. However, it is worth noting that however I might enter a design process on my own, the ultimate output will always be shaped and altered by the thoughts, ideas, input, and priorities of my collaborators. Equally, there will likely be situations in which I find I have to advocate for what is right based on the research I have done and my position as the (relative) expert on the given culture's clothing. By doing this project and creating for myself a framework for my approach to these types of projects, I am creating a foundation of knowledge and process that will better enable me to be an advocate in these situations. I am already happy to be the voice in a room reminding a group to return to the story/character/concept at hand, but by supporting this reminder with specifics in each project and a wide base of starting knowledge and analysis, I am able to position myself as a knowledgeable, trustworthy and deeply invested collaborator.

Finally, there are many, many clothing items from each culture I have researched upon which I have hardly touched. Menswear has not been considered at all in this study, hair and makeup have barely been addressed, and undergarments and accessories have received only a cursory glance. In order to fully put these stories and clothes on stage, I would have to consider all of these things. Additionally, because all of the stories I used for this study are fantasy pieces, there is flexibility of time and place that would not exist in a purely historical piece. I have pulled ideas from across time periods and included contemporary influences in all of the design work, but I also have not become an expert in any one garment from any one time as a result. The garments I produced (with the help of my colleagues) for this exploration are very much a survey, and an imperfect one at that. That they are the result of countless hours of research and deliberate design work is certainly true, but in many ways I have only just scratched the surface of clothing history in Asia.

Chapter Three: Literature Review or Does Research on this Topic Exist?

As I honed in on the specifics of my research project, I found that beyond the sort of literature review that I am used to doing for theatrical design processes, I needed to define terms and understand concepts that are relevant well beyond the confines of costume design. I read essays relating to performance, certainly, but also across various fields like anthropology, dress studies, and education, recognizing that in many cases I would need to construct my own definitions for a costume design application. What I found in this search was a veritable avalanche of complex theories, inspiring points of view, and challenging roadblocks. I discovered that plurality would inevitably reside at the center of my work, that there are no easy answers, and that as a result, flexibility would be paramount to my endeavors. This chapter unpacks, reorganizes and applies these difficult concepts to costume design, using examples from existing fashion and theatrical costume presentations wherever possible to clarify the attempt.

DESIGN AND FEAR

The earliest stages of this research effort were characterized by significant fear, a sprinkling of white guilt, and a lot of wondering whether I should be the person to approach these topics. My own identity felt like an insurmountable problem. As someone who wants to diversify access to theatre, both as entertainment and a career, I thought, should I not suggest that companies hire someone else when cultural expertise is at the crux of the storytelling? And yet, I kept returning to a core value of my own: I want to tell other people's stories because those are the ones I think are most important to tell. My goal is not, and has never been, to take these

stories away from the people they belong to, but to aid the effort of sharing them with wider and more diverse audiences. Luckily, as this battle waged within me, emotion and logic fighting for space, I found Dwight Conquergood's essay, "Performing as a Moral Act."

It was immediately clear to me that Conquergood's reasons for wanting to engage with ethnographic performance are quite similar to my reasons for embarking on this project. His essay opens with a quote from Alasdair MacIntyre that sums up these interests perfectly:

> The self has to find its moral identity in and through its membership in communities such as those of the family, the neighborhood, the city, and the tribe…Without those moral particularities to begin from there would never be anywhere to begin; but it is in moving forward from such particularity that the search for the good, for the universal, consists. (qtd. in Conquergood 1)

Theatre regularly views itself as performance of universal truths, but often the universality therein is limited to a very particular perspective: white, and Christian, and Western, etc. It is more interesting, and more essential, to search for universality among more diverse populations and help audiences to recognize that beyond difference, universally human experiences might still exist. Thus, the researchers who engage with these questions of ethnography and identity in performance contexts bear the burdens of making performances with integrity and of advocating for groups who may not have the opportunity to advocate for themselves.

Conquergood outlines four dangerous pitfalls into which ethnographic performance is prone to falling (fig. 3): the Custodian's Rip-Off, The Enthusiast's Infatuation, The Curator's Exhibitionism, and The Skeptic's Cop-Out. Each occupies a quadrant of Conquergood's diagram, framed by a vertical axis of identity versus difference, and a horizontal one of detachment versus commitment. *Identity*, in this usage, refers to a sense of similarity or "identifying with" a unique cultural idea or

experience; *difference* utterly denies any expression of similarity or shared experience. *Detachment* refers to a lack of investment, whereas *commitment* points to an overenthusiasm that tends to supersede listening to the persons actually having a particular lived experience. Each danger zone is made up of two: identity and detachment, identity and commitment, difference and commitment, or difference and detachment. All are damaging in different ways, but essential to understanding the central goal of Dialogical Performance.

The first trap in ethnographic performance practice, the Custodian's Rip-Off, sits at the intersection of identity and detachment: the rip-off comes from essentially plucking an element of a given culture from its source, without any kind of relationship with its people or true inquiry as to its origins and significance. Often, the instances of cultural appropriation in fashion fall into this category. Marc Jacobs has come under fire for using Bantu knots (fig. 4, 5) and dreadlocks (fig. 6, 7) on his (mostly white) models in recent years. There are several things to consider in assessing cultural appropriation: Who is taking an idea, and from whom? In the case of fashion, who is then wearing that garment/style/feature? Who is getting credit? Who is getting paid? In both Marc Jacobs examples, a white man in a position of power took an idea from black African culture, put it on white models, did not give credit to the source, presented it as his own unique idea and used it to make money for himself. After being called out for this on social media (regarding the dreadlocks in his Spring/Summer 2017 collection), Jacobs responded, "I respect and am inspired by people and how they look. I don't see color or race – I see people" (qtd. in Wagoner). Meanwhile, black Americans face everyday

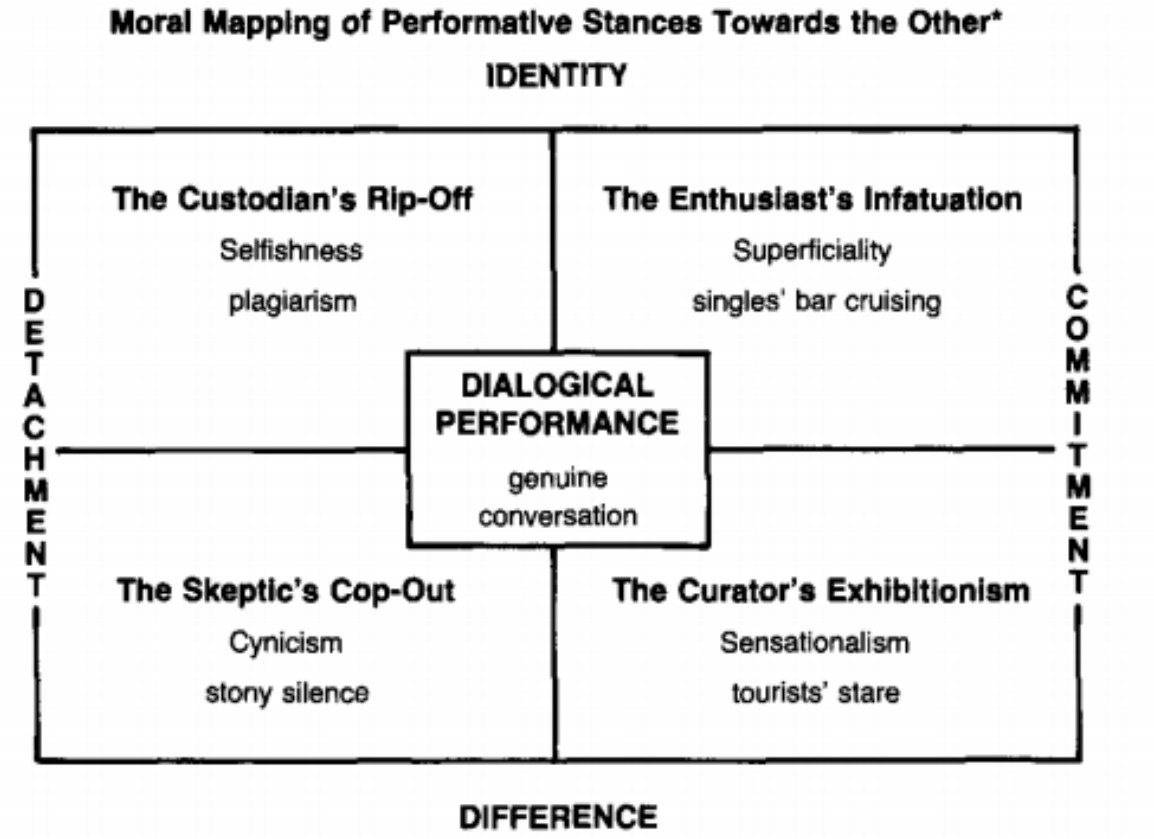

Figure 3. Moral Mapping of Performative Stances Towards the Other.

Dwight Conquergood's diagram depicts the four pitfalls one can fall into when engaging with ethnographic material in performance, with the ultimate goal of Dialogical Performance in the center.

discrimination for wearing these styles at work and at school. Dress codes forbid natural hairstyles in various ways and corporate culture often has unspoken rules about hair and professionalism that shutter black applicants out (McGregor). Jacobs' response exemplifies the Custodian's Rip-Off by claiming blindness to difference, while remaining unaware of and detached from the cultural significance of these hairstyles and the biases faced by the people who navigate the world wearing them.

Figure 4. Marc by Marc Jacobs, Spring/Summer 2015.

Figure 5. A woman with Bantu knots. Democratic Republic of Congo, 1950.

Figure 6. Marc Jacobs, Spring/Summer 2017.

Figure 7. Deandre Arnold at the Oscars.

> Texas teen Deandre Arnold was suspended from school over his dreadlocks, though he's been growing them for years and they are a part of his cultural identity.

Figure 8. Cultural Appropriation by Dior.

Left, Dior Pre-Fall 2017. Right, the Romanian vest that Dior copied almost exactly for the collection.

Another example of this in fashion is painfully obvious in the Pre-Fall 2017 collection for Christian Dior, designed by creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri. Models took the runway wearing designs knocked off almost exactly from Romanian traditional garments (fig. 8). *Beau Monde*, a Romanian fashion magazine responded by helping to create Bihor Couture – a company devoted to making original Romanian design available to customers across the globe, while paying Romanian designers and artisans for their work. From the Bihor couture website: "While it makes sense for inspiration to happen, we think it's a bit unfair that nothing returns in terms of money or even PR to the community that's struggling to keep traditions alive. As a result, these traditions are dying." As in the hair examples above, Dior was happy to use a

longstanding tradition for inspiration but failed to give credit or pay the artisans and designers from whom the label took these ideas.

The Enthusiast's Infatuation is subtler. It assumes that since we are all human, we are all the same, and everything that makes us different is superficial. The problem here is an erasure of the particularities that give us individuality and give cultures presence and unique positions in the world. This "too facile identification [assumption of similarity] with the other coupled with enthusiastic commitment" (Conquergood 6) trivializes the differences among us that are, in fact, monumental.

Theatrically, many attempts at increasing diversity on Broadway and regional stages have fallen into this unfortunate trap. Colorblind casting, however well intentioned, assumes that the story being told is universal enough that not only can everyone relate to it, but also anyone can play the roles and the results will be the same. As Omari Newton points out in an essay about *All My Sons* on Broadway, colorblind casting "is a form of erasure. It is the theatrical equivalent of ignorantly telling your Black friend "I don't see colour" when they try to engage you in a conversation about race. It is passively dehumanizing in the way that it dismisses the racism that is embedded in the very fabric of how colonized countries were founded."

Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* is a play written about white people in the 1940s. It takes place at a point in history when interracial romantic relationships were difficult if not impossible to maintain, and black Americans had so few opportunities for economic advancement that the wealth divide along racial lines was stark. By casting this play without considering the race of the characters, and without engaging with the unlikelihood of these arrangements according to a moment in history (because the play was not written to engage racial themes), the play loses its grounding in realism and shifts to an idealized America that erases such immense historical

blemishes as slavery and segregation. Casting directors or producers were attempting an enthusiastic leveling of the playing field; instead, by assuming too much likeness among the realities of the people involved, the casting choices managed to at least confuse and in some cases, offend. Omari Newton suggests "color-conscious" casting instead, a concept which has become widely encouraged in American Theatre and thinks more critically about what it means to cast actors of color in specific roles, according to their own and the characters' identities.

Historically, the most familiar of these ethnographic pitfalls is the Curator's Exhibitionism. This intense commitment to difference has borne concepts like the Noble Savage, or the idealized vision of "uncivilized man, who symbolizes the innate goodness of one not exposed to the corrupting influences of civilization" (Britannica). This touches my own research most closely in ethnographic photography and drawings of the 19th to early 20th century – there is a tricky risk in using these images as research sources for clothing. For example, Native American subjects in such representations often wore elements of clothing and regalia that were taken out of context, in order for the photographer to create an idealized image of the subject. Edward Curtis's photography (fig. 9) has been criticized for using this type of idealism to create a "timeless vision of Native American culture" (King) that disregards the changes that were already taking place in Native American lives due to American expansion (fig. 10). In turn, these images were disseminated as factual representations of Native people, and stereotypical representations based on these images persist to this day. "Too great a distance," says Conquergood "…denies to the other membership in the same moral community as ourselves" (7).

Figure 9. Photograph of Chief Joseph by Edward Curtis, 1903.

Many of Curtis's photographs are known to be staged, idealized representations of Native American culture.

Figure 10. Pah-ute (Paiute) Indian Group, Cedar, Utah, 1872 by Timothy H. O'Sullivan.

> Here, Native Americans are shown to have adopted elements of European dress by the early 1870s, 30 years earlier than Curtis's romanticized photograph in Figure 9.

The final danger, in the bottom left corner of Conquergood's map, is the Skeptic's Cop-Out, "the prison-house of Detachment and Difference" (8). One who makes this egregious mistake refuses to engage with the "…ethical tensions and moral ambiguities of performing culturally sensitive materials…" (8), which Conquergood views as the worst possible offense. He argues that only individuals belonging to the dominant culture can play by these rules, given that those in minority groups must constantly adapt and "code switch" in order to live their lives. That is, people outside the dominant culture often find themselves having to conform or partially conform in the way they speak, dress, or style their hair, to what is acceptable to the dominant culture. They have to engage with cultural differences in order to live their lives. Those in the dominant culture are never required to make these changes in order to succeed, and are able to get away with not acknowledging these realities among other groups. This refusal to engage is

the worst offense because it does not allow for any discourse whatsoever, and only takes a moral stance by omission. Reading this paragraph of Conquergood's essay convinced me once and for all that I *must* do this project.

In the center of this map, Dialogical Performance rejects the problems of the four surrounding pitfalls and presents itself as the ultimate goal. "This performative stance," says Conquergood, "struggles to bring together different voices, world views, value systems, and beliefs so that they can have a conversation with one another…It is a kind of performance that resists conclusions, it is intensely committed to keeping the dialogue between performer and text open and ongoing" (9). The key to this attempt is in maintaining consciousness of both difference and identity, allowing for the oppositions at each corner of the map to push and pull in debate and discourse. It must also allow for interrogation and interpretation of the "host culture" (9) by the other – dialogue, by definition, cannot be a one-way street. I have returned to these principles of Dialogical Performance over and over again in order to continue this project. Each time I seemed to hit a wall - to find some piece of irrevocable fact that meant my project could not work – I returned to these thoughts to remember that a certain multiplicity is at the core of this work. The moment I make a singular conclusion about a culture I am researching, or worse, a singular conclusion across several cultures, I will have lost the thread of these principles. While I am not personally performing in order to create this work, problems of identity and costume design are inextricably linked to the performer in theatrical events. As theatre is collaborative to begin with, it has an element of dialogue built in. I am proposing, with this project, that dialogical design is a piece of the dialogical performance effort no less difficult to navigate, and just as important.

Another source of encouragement in the early stages of this project came in the form of Walter Byongsok Chon's essay "Intercultural Dramaturgy: Dramaturg as Cultural Liaison." Chon recounts his experience of working on a production of *Eclipsed*, and at first feeling limited by his Korean, male identity in pursuit of research about the Liberian women in the story. He notes that his "difference, a challenge in the beginning, gave [him] a new perspective on how the dramaturg could be instrumental in bridging the gap between cultures" (140). Chon also mentions the difficulties inherent in presenting culture in the globalized context of our current world, but expresses hope that dramaturgs can help to mitigate these challenges and use their research to open new worlds for theatrical audiences.

Chon's perspective has been useful for me in pursuing a culturally based and potentially sensitive thesis project. Costume designers are a type of dramaturg in their own right – often our research begins long before an official dramaturg begins work on a production, so we are used to combing through extensive research about time, place, and context in addition to our clothing research. Particularly when the project's concept involves transference – like setting a Shakespeare play in a different time and place – a specific sort of dramaturgy is required of designers in order to create a unified, logical production. Chon's essay is a good reminder for me that there are more types of outsiders to cultural experience than simply white people – everyone is outside of something, even many things. As my research progressed and I began the design process, I was able to shift my view of the challenges intrinsic to this process to one of opportunities – to learn, for myself, and to expand points of view, for my audience. Culture is constantly shifting – it increasingly defies definition as the world becomes more interconnected. In terms of design, this too presents an opportunity, in allowing for interpretation and global points of view beyond nationality or ethnic tradition.

THE PROBLEM OF DEFINITIONS

Cultural Identity

In approaching the subject of cultural identity, a high degree of ambiguity must be acknowledged. Ackroyd and Pilkington (*Childhood and the Construction of Ethnic Identities in a Global Age*) state that "cultures are often depicted as discrete systems with clear boundaries separating one from another; represented as integrated wholes with members sharing fundamental beliefs in common; and characterized by distinct traditions which are passed on from generation to generation" (444). They argue that this positions children as purely products of a rigid cultural experience, leaving no room for individual production of identity beyond these strict boundaries. Given the globalized nature of the world today, this rigidity is both limiting and impossible. Societies are too intimately connected across geographical, national and cultural boundaries to remain insulated from one another; thus, the boundaries of unchanging cultural identity are blurred and even obliterated.

Stuart Hall addresses similar concerns in his *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, from a perspective of Caribbean cinema. Framing identity as a production "which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (222), Hall challenges notions of authority and authenticity claimed within the very term "cultural identity." As it is traditionally approached, cultural identity speaks to a shared concept of self, collective history, and common ancestry. This "rediscovered, essential identity" (223), he argues, has important organizational power among groups of people. However, this type of identity, in the wrong hands, becomes essentialist and ignores the nuances of hybrid identities that are integral to any diasporic population. A second view recognizes that in addition to the similarities of shared history, there are significant differences that can be described as "what we have become"

(225). This view allows for identity production, a process of becoming that is dynamic and future oriented, rather than the stagnancy of simply 'being.'

Cultural identity as a process of production is particularly interesting to me in the context of Cinderella characters. Cinderella, in her many forms, constructs an identity through clothing for purposes of social mobility. Furthermore, the word "production" alone is interesting theatrically – we create *productions* of stories, through design elements we *produce* character identity, and in costume shops we *produce* custom garments. These current points of view on cultural identity justify expanding beyond a researched "traditional" garment as the foundation for constructing cultural character identity. Most of the Persecuted Heroine stories I read for this project were gathered and translated into English in the 19th century, meaning that most had probably existed for centuries before that and had ample time to become hybrid stories. In fact, they are in many ways so similar that it seems there must be sharing among nations and cultures embedded in the written versions. These realities indicate that the design for these projects should reflect hybrid, multiple, complex identities that may be rooted in one place, but have been affected by broader interactions. For the purposes of this project, the heroine's cultural identity will maintain roots in a given society, nation, or group, but her clothing will reflect a production of her own identity, as it is written in the specific tales, as much as her historical roots. The theme of multiplicity returns in nearly all of the most important terms involved in this research, and speaks to a way of viewing the world that embraces hybrid and complex identities for their uniqueness rather than shaming them for being difficult to categorize.

Ethnic Dress

Words around clothing and dress have complicated meanings and histories. Even those that seem neutral at first are often imbued with negative value judgments influenced by the

limitations and prejudices of Western scholarship. "Costume" tends to refer to "exceptional dress…dress outside the context of everyday life" (Baizerman 126), as in the clothing worn for events like Halloween or Carnivale, or theatrical costume. It also has connotations of historicity and distance from contemporary, Western experience, specifically. Additionally, qualifiers such as "national," "folk," "tribal," "traditional," "primitive," and "exotic" all have significant limitations and Eurocentric biases. "National" refers to geographic borders, ignoring possibilities for culture to expand beyond such arbitrary locational boundaries. "Traditional" seems to refer to something frozen in time and unaffected by any outside influences, which *may* be possible in some cases, but does not describe most culturally significant forms of dress, since trade and colonization have been changing cultures around the world for centuries. Notions of "authenticity" are bound up in this term, but remain imposed by outside (Western) forces.

Given the challenges of speaking about dress as Western academics looking at clothing outside of Western fashion history, Suzanne Baizerman et al (*Eurocentrism in the Study of Ethnic Dress*) choose "ethnic dress" as the best term, recognizing that it is nevertheless imperfect. If "ethnic group" is defined as "any group of people who set themselves apart and are set apart from other groups with whom they interact or coexist in terms of some distinctive criterion or criteria which may be linguistic, racial or cultural" (Seymour-Smith qtd in Baizerman 129), ethnic dress can be ascribed as one of the criteria. This term can encompass other terms that prove problematic to the discussion on their own, and can extend to groups not typically included in such discussions (a frequent example is the Amish, since their dress and cultural affiliations are derived from European roots). Importantly, Baizerman et al note that "ethnic" is a term which has been at times loaded - given to creating an "us versus them" dynamic. However, recent scholarship recognizes flexibility in use of the term "ethnicity." Ethnicity can be thought

of as a process that develops and changes over time, a theme that returns in many of the terms I have sought to define for the purposes of this project.

Like cultural identity, and potentially as an aspect of it, dress cannot be thought of as something rigidly defined or protected from outside influences. National costume came about, in many instances, from a desire to preserve and protect cultural identities, but largely resulted in forms that are static and only used for occasions of historical/cultural significance. The realities of ethnic identity as experienced and projected through dress speak to complex histories, a global contemporary existence, and changeable futures.

Stereotype

Charles Ramirez-Berg's *Categorizing the Other: Stereotypes and Stereotyping* addresses the difficulty in finding a singular definition of "stereotype." In cognitive psychology, Ramirez-Berg writes, stereotyping is defined as a way of quickly categorizing information that remains value-neutral; this is a process in which all humans engage, and it might be argued that it is necessary to our existence to do so. However, the definition that most people associate with stereotype adds the extra dimension of *judgment* based on those categorizations. This value judgment is usually seen as negative, but even when it is perceived as positive by some, it remains a generalization and oversimplification of the human condition. Ramirez-Berg quantifies this process thusly:

category making + ethnocentrism + prejudice = stereotyping;

he defines this as "a negative generalization used by an in-group (Us) about an out-group (Them)" (Ramirez-Berg 15).

There are several qualities that, Ramirez-Berg argues, all stereotype processes share:

1. They are absolute and unchanging. Once fixed, a stereotype does not allow for subtle shifts of individual personality or experience.
2. It is probable that stereotypes have a basis in fact, however minute. This creates added difficulty in challenging stereotypes, but the fraction of a stereotype that is true may not have anything to do with culturally specific traits.
3. Stereotypes act as a synecdoche for the "out-group" – they are "the part that stands for the whole," (16) and they assume homogeneity within a group.
4. Stereotypes are too general to be reliable predictors of truth.
5. Stereotypes ignore history completely, meaning they lack context.
6. Stereotypes are normalized by repetition.
7. Stereotypes are believed, and this can lead to harmful actions just as other forms of un-interrogated belief can and do.
8. Stereotyping is not the exclusive domain of the in-group – it goes both ways.
9. Stereotypes are ideological: they indicate a "preferred power relation" (21). Stereotyping operates as a form of hegemony, maintaining the status quo and keeping out-groups in a subordinate position.
10. The in-group stereotypes itself according to undesirable attributes observed within its own members.
11. **The antidote to stereotyping is knowledge (23).**

Given these relative truths as a framework, stereotype in theatre is used as a way of defining the Other and making them easily recognizable. Often, it is also a way of demeaning characters associated with out-groups. In costume contexts, stereotype simplifies the qualities of dress in a

particular group or region, assuming homogeneity among the group instead of taking into account individual choice based on personality, function, economic status, etc. This is problematic when in-group characters are treated as individuals with distinct personalities and powers of choice, while out-group characters are instead treated as visual synecdoche for their cultural groups.

Aoife Monks ("Playing the Body: Costume, Stereotypes and Modernity in Performance") discusses the role of costume in producing identity on stage, especially as interpreted in nineteenth century (British) theatrical performance. Societal shifts wrought by British Imperialism and changes in clothing production obscured clarity of identity. The extension of Britain's borders and therefore of who could claim (or be forced to claim) "Britishness" meant that a colonial native wearing British clothing presented an unclear identity to others. Clothing production, in the form of large scale manufacturing rather than custom and handmade garments, rendered the people on the streets homogenous. Monks argues that this led to a demand in the theatre for identity to be produced with indisputable clarity – leading to the prevalence of stereotype in theatrical performances. Paraphrasing Homi K. Bhabha, she writes, "the use of stereotypes to fix identity belies a profound anxiety about the unknowable otherness of colonial natives" (108). However, even as costume seemed to fix identity, it had the equal power to obscure it once again; if an actor changed costume within a performance, they might still be playing the same character or have switched to another character. Dress as a marker of identity is far from infallible.

Monks uses examples relating to blackface in minstrel shows, the Dame character in English pantomime, and depictions of Irishness on stage. At the height of these uses of stereotype, costume "worked to reinforce and produce power relationships between the audience

and the images onstage, making appearance and identity seamless" (Monks 107). In many cases, these examples use the "wrong" body to produce these images – a white actor in blackface, or a male body playing the female Dame. I have set the body aside in my own project for a multitude of reasons (see Chapter 1), but I have assumed a "correct" body throughout the process. Meaning, if these clothes were actually to be worn on stage, they would be occupied by bodies from a cultural context that matched the clothing itself. Casting the "right" body, however, does not preclude the use of stereotype in costume design. Any time a caricature is made through clothing, ignoring the complexities of individual character identity, stereotype is at play. For example, women are often portrayed as stereotypical "stock" characters – the innocent girl next door, the tomboy, the ugly duckling, or the promiscuous teen. At first blush, these characters' costumes might jump to mind: a sweet white dress, shapeless comfortable clothes, glasses and frizzy hair, a tight, revealing dress (Figures 11-14). But a true exploration of character might contest these impulses, and should be trusted to create deeper expressions of character identity than the initial stereotype might. The stereotype is sometimes a useful starting point – often they are based in some amount of truth - but the character can be developed more deeply to engage with diverse parts of their personality that might not be exhibited by the clothing of that initial impulse. In a cultural context, this requires a deeper dive into not just understanding what the

Figure 11. Olivia Newton John as Sandy in *Grease* – an innocent girl next door type.

Figure 12. Amanda Bynes as Viola in *She's the Man* – a tomboy type.

Figure 13. Anne Hathaway as Mia Thermopolis in *The Princess Diaries* – an ugly duckling type.

Figure 14. Stockard Channing as Rizzo in Grease – a promiscuous teen type.

> While this dress might not seem overtly sexy to our contemporary eye, it does place her in direct opposition to Sandy's innocent look (Figure 11.)

clothing items are, but how they are worn, when, and by whom. It is not enough to put a Japanese woman in just any kimono, or a Native American chief in just any headdress. Cultural clothing has layers of history and context built into it, which can cause characters to read as stereotypes when the clothing is misused.

Stereotypical production of identity is a device I have tried hard to avoid throughout this process. Monks' ideas about the use of stereotype in nineteenth century theatre clarify several ways to think about the complexities of producing identity on stage through costume. Much of my research has been coalescing around the nineteenth century in one way or another – many of the fairy tales were gathered and written down at this time, "national costume" was solidified in many countries as a way of fixing identity, and stereotype found a foothold in Western theatrical production. Though I ultimately did not choose to design around a 19th century aesthetic, it is useful to know that so many facets of this project have roots in thinking belonging to the same time frame and geographic region – thinking that still drives prevailing Western attitudes and that progress demands must be dismantled.

Authenticity

Sian Jones ("Negotiating Authentic Objects and Authentic Selves: Beyond the Deconstruction of Authenticity") presents two opposing views of authenticity, the first defined by materialism and the second by constructivism. Material culture establishes authenticity "as an objective and measurable attribute inherent in the material fabric, form and function of artefacts and monuments," while constructivism strips the object of inherent authenticity, preferring the view that "it is a quality that is culturally constructed and varies according to who is observing the object and in what context" (182). The concept of "aura" – an atmosphere or force emanating

from an object – appears in multiple points of view about authenticity, but also remains an unsettled argument. Thus, what is true or genuine or real about an object is not entirely stable.

The materialist view yearns for stability; it punishes evolution in the context or use of an object, such as a dress that has been cut apart and reconstructed to suit a change in what is fashionable (fig. 15). According to Sian Jones, in this view, "an authentic historical object or building is thus one that is true to its origins in terms of its date, material, form, authorship, workmanship and, in many cases, its primary context and use" (184). The art world takes a similar view, that aura arises from the presence of an original and cannot be attributed to a reproduction. Walter Benjamin, the accepted author of this theory in art, went so far as to say that the existence of reproductions also devalues the original by challenging its uniqueness. As efforts toward authenticity entered the modern era, "societies, nations and tribes also became considered as discrete, bounded entities, each with a unique individual character or essence" (188). This view serves to solidify categorizations of difference and attempts purification in what can be seen as authentic.

By contrast, the constructivist view is that authenticity is "a product of 'culture,' or…the many different cultures through which it is constructed" (182). This view, Jones argues, remains problematic in its ignorance of materiality; it seems that constructivism allows authenticity to "be simply wrapped around *any* object irrespective of its unique history and materiality" (183). As long as a viewer does not know they are looking at a reproduction, they will experience aura and authenticity in the same way as if they were looking at an original.

Figure 15. An example of a remade garment.

> This 1840s dress from the Victoria and Albert Museum collections is made of silk woven in the 1770s. According to the description on the museum website, close inspection reveals old stitching lines from this dress being taken apart and reconstructed in its current configuration. This kind of recycling obscures material authenticity and origins.

Jones' hypothesis of authenticity relies on connection. It empowers the object and its audience, and the energy that passes between them, as active players in authenticity. "For when we look at how people experience and negotiate authenticity through objects," Jones says, "it is networks of relationships between people, places and things that appear to be central, not the things in and of themselves" (189). This view allows for heterogeneity and hybridity in ways that other points of view have not, thus challenging modern Western attempts at clean and pure categorization. This idea calls back to the Dwight Conquergood's concept of dialogical performance, by putting "dialog" or a mutual exchange at the heart of the definition.

My project problematizes the structure of purely materialist views of authenticity. The clothing I have designed pushes beyond the boundaries of direct historical reproduction both in construction and design. Theatrical construction nearly always strays from historical methods

and practices for practical reasons. Though garments created for the stage are bespoke, usually one of a kind, and constructed at a standard on par with couture, they often have to function in ways that the original garment did not. They need to be put on or taken off in thirty seconds, or the actor needs to roll around on the floor while wearing it, or put it on onstage in front of hundreds of people. Until the 20th century, most clothes were not made for such ease of use. Furthermore, there are considerations specific to this project that defy a materialist view. By building two of the garments in half scale, I have removed the possibility of them being worn by a person and changed the scale of the patterns, prints, and fabrics that would be appropriate. Simply by changing the scale of the garment, I have taken away the possibility of complete stability in their authenticity. Pure cultural construction was also impossible in my project, since the objects I have produced are not actually of the cultures they represent. They automatically lack direct cultural construction of value, since they lack their own histories.

Yet, what I thought I would try to evoke is an *aura* of authenticity in the experience of viewing my work. Here, Jones' argument is useful – the provenance of the object and cultural cues are only a piece of the puzzle, therefore, the individual experiences of the viewer offer a new space for an authentic engagement. Authenticity in my project would be achieved, I thought at first, if I were able to provoke an experience of communion with the objects and stories presented therein, especially among people who are intimately involved in the cultures at hand. Recognition of symbols, colors, fabrics or shapes as culturally valuable would hopefully serve to produce the aura of authenticity, in spite of the newness and hybrid design also included in these objects.

Before I actually began the cultural research and design process of the project, however, I opted to abandon the word authenticity altogether. The term relies on a definition that is too

static for the artifacts I intended to create – garments that speak to the multiplicity and complexity of cultural identification in the 21st century, while also maintaining a sense of tradition or past as required by the individual stories. Katarina Bušić highlights this challenge - that the idea of "authenticity" is subjective and dynamic – in her essay, "Experiences, problems, and considerations of applied ethnology: modern meanings and manifestations of national costumes." Bušić highlights the difficulties of research and curation involving "national costume," specifically in Croatia, but her thoughts apply in a broader context. In Croatia and other parts of Eastern Europe, the development of a national costume standard only came about in the 19th century, at a time when such displays of culture became a way of pushing back against industrialization and maintaining local identity as the tempo of globalization increased. Thus the clothing that we might think of as the most "authentic" to those cultures has, in fact, been constructed in fairly recent history, and may not fully exemplify what is traditional in those cultures. Bušić also addresses the role of professional evaluators in folk competitions, noting that "by participating (observing, suggesting, interpreting) experts…necessarily influence (modern) cultural processes/practices to a certain extent" (187). This can be equated to professional analysis of any kind of "local" or "traditional" work – the expert observer always interprets from a background of educational privilege that is nonetheless removed from the advent of national costume design and construction itself. There are many factors at play of which the evaluator likely remains unaware. The usage of the garments is also compromised, as in many parts of the world these items may only be used for ceremonial occasions like competitions or festivals. The national costume fails to address the full history of ethnic dress in the region.

Given the focus in this essay on staged and evaluated performances of cultural identity, the context is remarkably similar to that of theatrical production. The audience is always lacking

information about the conversations held by the production team prior to finishing the design – all an audience is able to evaluate is the final product. This has the potential to build controversy when research is not directly adhered to. I have watched, in costumes shops I have worked in, as a designer digs through a minimally stocked box of medals moments before a dress rehearsal, looking for something – anything – to add interest to a uniform. Just recently, a friend told me that a theatre she worked for tallied the subjects of letters from audience members, and came up with large numbers of audience members commenting on the inaccuracy of military uniforms.

Figure 16. Challenges of authenticity in military costume.

> This screen grab from The Hurt Locker is annotated to point out inaccuracies in the uniform.

For people who are very familiar with a particular uniform, any kind of liberty taken with ornamentation or the way it is worn can take them out of the storytelling – enough so that they

feel compelled to comment later. The intentions of a designer in taking artistic liberty are not always clear, or do not always read for an audience that was not in on the conversation. They cannot help but view it as ignorance or intentional disrespect, and the authenticity of the uniform, the character associated with it, and the story being told have been compromised for that audience member (fig. 16).

Since I knew from the beginning that I did not intend to reconstruct historical, traditional, ethnic garments exactly, the pursuit of authenticity would have been futile. Instead, I have sought to create garments with *integrity*: to their cultures of origin, to the stories at hand, and to the characters who would wear them. In her book *Cultural Cannibalism: Art, Appropriation, and the Commodification of Difference*, Deborah Root makes a similar decision. "Integrity," she says, "retains an idea of cultural wholeness and of a relatively unbroken connection between the image or object and the culture in which it is made and used…Whereas authenticity is dependent on the external form of the object, integrity takes into account how and where the object is used" (97). Without ever having named it previously, I have come to realize that this is always a part of my design process – remaining true to the story and characters at hand, whatever direction a conceptual design might take. It is my belief that integrity has the power to produce an "aura" just as effectively as supposed authenticity can, since it maintains the pursuit of honesty or truth but within a set of rules that are more flexible and more closely related to reality.

Cultural Appropriation

In their essay *"*Nothing Comes from Nowhere': Reflections on Cultural Appropriation as the Representation of Other Cultures," James O. Young and Susan Haley address concerns about artists representing cultures other than their own in their work. "Subject appropriation," they write, "occurs when members of one culture (call them outsiders for the sake of brevity)

represent members of other cultures (insiders for the sake of convenience) or aspects of insiders' culture" (Young 268). In the authors' view, it is impossible to make sweeping generalizations about the morality of this kind of appropriation – it must be considered on a case-by-case basis and interrogated individually regarding the possible harm (or benefit) to the represented culture.

An important point that Young and Haley make is that appropriation automatically involves taking, but that in subject appropriation, what is taken is not always obvious. They also argue that if an outsider creates art representing a culture, it does not take away the audience from insider artists; if discrimination exists, this is not the outsider artist's doing or responsibility but that of the audience or agent or whoever has rejected the insider art. A much more relevant problem arises when there is *mis*representation of a culture by an outsider, especially misrepresentation that is negative or harmful, like reinforcing stereotypes. Misrepresentation can happen in obviously negative ways, or in subtler ways like sensationalizing the "other" (as in the "noble savage" trope). Avoiding essentialism, which is the driving force behind stereotype, and focusing on the individual subject, becomes a high priority in the endeavor to represent another culture in art. Young and Haley go on to argue that it is even possible that outsiders are able to interpret culture in useful ways *because* they are outsiders – they have perspective that insiders are unable to access, like an author writing a biography rather than an autobiography. Interpreting Edward Said, the authors point to the very goal that I have stated in my theatrical endeavors – the opportunity to "awaken an audience to the whole idea of a different culture, and…create cultural revival even in cultures other than [one's] own" (278).

PBS.org defines cultural appropriation as "the unacknowledged or inappropriate adoption of the customs, practices, ideas, etc. of one people or society by members of another and typically more dominant people or society" (Ramsey et al. 2017). This definition concisely

summarizes how I have mostly heard and used the term, stripping away the blurred lines and fuzzy moralities of more detailed conversations.

The crux of the definition, then, seems to lie in "appropriateness" – a fascinating play on words. Essentially it seems that my job, as a designer dealing with unfamiliar cultures, is to do my research and respect the symbolism and significance of pieces I intend to use. While this is not surprising, it is useful to see it written down in multiple sources and hear it directly from a few members of non-dominant cultures. In terms of costume design, cultural appropriation is the under-researched, stereotypical, and/or distorted use of cultural symbols, traditional clothing, or ethnic dress in character representations of an individual belonging to an "other" cultural group. If I do my homework to avoid *mis*representing a culture through clothing, makeup, or hair, most likely I will avoid harmful or offensive appropriation of that culture.

At the conclusion of Young and Haley's argument there is, once again, an emphasis on communication. For purposes of clarity, many conversations about appropriation of culture rely on an essentialist point of view that rarely reflects the way the real world operates. In reality, especially given the ease of travel and connection in today's world, culture is infinitely fluid. Globalization has almost eradicated culture in the traditional sense of siloed, specific groups that are unaffected by anything outside of themselves. Though Young's essay focuses on cultural representations in literature, the ideas therein can be extended to theatrical interpretations of character as well:

> This character is human, he or she functions in a society; and literature places us in a position to better understand what that is like from the inside. It is a tremendously powerful and useful moral tool, which promotes mutual understanding and respect and which could serve to keep humanity from future holocausts. (287)

Though this seems perhaps a heavy weight to be borne by literature or theatre, the sentiment speaks to exactly why my storytelling interests extend far beyond my personal experience. Theatre has the power to foster compassion, so it is my responsibility as an artist to do so in whatever way I can. Central to this pursuit is understanding – first, as a designer, I must understand the culture at hand, in order to offer something that preserves cultural integrity when it is more widely disseminated. Then it can be offered to an audience in the hope that it will increase their own understanding and lead to greater empathy.

Chapter Four: Persecuted Heroine Costume Design Process

> When we take seriously the proposition that clothing is woven of meanings as much as it is of fiber, its structure can provide a dimension of understanding that greatly illuminates a purely historical chronology of changing modes of dress. (Dalby 14)

Besides the extensive literature review, this research project consists of three case studies, all involving persecuted heroine stories and the design of the title character's "ball gown" or "transformation" garment. This chapter summarizes each of the stories used in the project, including short tables demonstrating how the tales fit into the ATU 510 tale type. Following each brief summary is a reflection on the design and decision-making processes for each of these garments, from story details about specific clothing to symbolism and cultural background. Images include art, both ancient and contemporary, from each culture, as well as contemporary interpretations of the garments in question by "in-group" fashion designers. All of these elements contributed to my thinking about the garments I designed, and the opportunity to draw parallels across the three design processes helped me to clarify my process and principles. Finally, each section concludes with images of my renderings and the finished garments built from those renderings.

CHINA: YEH-HSIEN

Yeh-hsien, or the Chinese Cinderella, is commonly referred to as the oldest Cinderella story. It may or may not be, but it does use the same identifying object as later, Western stories: a shoe (table 1). In the story, Yeh-hsien feeds a fish until it grows so large, she has to release it into the pond behind her family's home. The gigantic fish will only appear for Yeh-hsien, so her stepmother tricks her into taking off her old clothes and puts them on to go out to the pond. The

stepmother kills the fish, devastating Yeh-hsien. When the fish does not respond to her the next day, the girl weeps until a man "with messy hair and dressed in tattered clothes descend(s) from the heavens" (Heiner 396), and tells her to retrieve the fish's bones and hide them in her room. Once she does this, the fish answers her prayers. When the time for the cave festival arrives, Yeh-hsien waits for her stepmother to leave, then dresses herself in "a cloak made of kingfisher feathers and golden shoes" (396), provided by the fish, and heads to the festival herself. When it seems her stepmother is suspicious of this beautiful woman at the festival, Yeh-hsien flees, losing a shoe. The shoe ends up in the hands of a King, who tries it on every woman in his kingdom, to no avail. Finally, the match to the shoe is found in Yeh-hsien's house, and she dons her halcyon cloak again to meet the king and try on the shoe. The two marry, stepmother and stepsister are killed by flying stones, and the king drains the fish-bones' power with his greed.

Table 1 – Essential elements of tale type ATU 510A in *Yeh-hsien* story

Motif	**Yeh-hsien**
Persecuted Heroine	Stepmother/sisters
Help/helper, usually magic	Fish with red fins and golden eyes
Meeting the prince, disguised	Cloak of kingfisher feathers
Identification, esp. by object	Tiny golden shoe
Marriage to prince/king	After trying the slipper on every woman in his kingdom

It was important to me, first, that Yeh-hsien's "transformation garment" – the one she wears to the cave festival – indicate a past China, one that feels as much historical as fantastical. I made a definitive choice to avoid qipao (fig. 17), as it is a garment strongly associated with 20th century stereotyping of Chinese women and their traditional or ethnic dress, and it strips away thousands of years of well documented clothing history in the region. This slim garment bears almost no resemblance to the styles of this long history, other than the left-over-right diagonal

opening at the neck. It feels a bit too contemporary as well, since its popularity in Hollywood in the 1920s-1940s gave it mass appeal in the West. Additionally, "hanfu," or clothing styles worn by the Han ethnic majority centuries ago, is experiencing a resurgence in China. These styles have been supplanted over hundreds of years of foreign influence and domination, but are being explored and worn in every day life by Chinese millennials searching for a connection back to tradition and cultural identity. The movement reminds me of Western historical fashion enthusiasm – there are blogs, Instagram accounts, and even shops devoted to it. But for Chinese people, hanfu represents a deep connection to cultural identity as well as the past. In an interview with Yiyin Zhong for *The Telegraph*, one enthusiast and hanfu shop owner points out that people sometimes "confuse the clothing with Japanese kimonos or traditional Korean attire…But now more people recognize that this is the traditional attire of the Han people" (telegraph.co.uk).

Figure 17. Grace Kelly wearing qipao in the 1950s.

From exploring contemporary interpretations of hanfu, such as those depicted on the tumblr page "hanfugallery," (figs. 18-20) I noticed a few things that became essential to my own design process. First, there are many, many styles that "count" as hanfu. China was unified by Qin Shihuang, whose rule is known as the Qin dynasty, around 221 BC. The next period of Chinese history was the Han dynasty, from which the word "hanfu" derives. Even before these dynasties, certain elements of Chinese dress that persist today already existed, such as the left-over-right diagonal overlap at the neck. Other than two periods of "foreign" rule – the Yuan and Qing dynasties – Chinese history is largely Han history, and silhouettes from almost any time period can be considered hanfu. Second, contemporary creators of hanfu do not seem to limit their fabric choices to what is traditional or accurate to the specific garments they have chosen. It appears that color palette and weight/drape are the most important considerations. Chinese brocade, the only specifically Chinese fabric I knew before starting this project, is not well suited to hanfu in most cases because it is usually too stiff and structural for these flowing, layered garments. By and large, hanfu enthusiasm allows for a contemporary spin.

Figures 18, 19, 20. Contemporary interpretations of hanfu.

This particular version of the ATU 510 tale type gives helpful clues about design in its details. Though it is the only one of the tales I explored that offered some time context – before the Ch'in and Han Dynasties – researching clothing of such ancient times proved nearly impossible. Given the limited availability of this research, the broad strokes indicating time, and the reality that this story is fantasy, it seemed to me there was plenty of flexibility in what Yeh-hsien's garments could be. The story describes what Yeh-hsien wears to the cave festival as a cloak, and uses the same term later when she puts on the same garment to try on the golden shoe for the king. Since this is an English translation, there are two possibilities for what this actually meant. "Doupeng," or the word for cloak, refers to a garment without sleeves that is primarily worn for warmth and protection from the wind (fig. 21). We might also call it a cape in the West, since it connects only at the neck and does not allow for much freedom of movement due to the lack of sleeves or slits for the arms. The other possibility is "pifeng," which might be translated

to “cape” but does not directly indicate the same garment. Pifeng have sleeves, and basically refer to the outermost layer of a hanfu ensemble (fig 22). Given this potential confusion, I decided that other descriptors from the story mattered more to the design than the specific shape of the garment Yeh-hsien wears. The ornamentation on this cloak is described as “kingfisher feathers” first and later “halcyon;” the halcyon kingfisher became a primary inspiration for the garments I ultimately designed.

Figure 21. Example of a doupeng (cloak) in ancient Chinese art.

Figure 22. Example of a pifeng (cape), with sleeves.

The silhouette I chose (fig. 23) for Yeh-hsien's transformation is from the Six Dynasties period, which immediately followed the Han Dynasty in 222 AD. I chose this silhouette for its reference to bird wings – ribbons falling from the wearer's waist and sharply pointed corners at the hem flutter as she walks, mimicking a flying swallow (Xun/Chunming, 62). I chose fabrics for their color, weight, and drape, much more than for any particular reference to Chinese historical or traditional patterns. Most of the fabrics are silk, in the long-standing tradition of Chinese silk production. The colors are directly inspired by the halcyon kingfisher, a bird much revered in Chinese poetry and art (fig. 24). The first literary reference to the kingfisher in Chinese writing occurred in 530 BC, in a similar context to how it is used in Yeh-hsien – a halcyon cloak. In a second century poem titled "The Halcyon Birds," kingfishers "seem to

Figure 23. 2D schematic of Six Dynasties silhouette with swallowtail ribbons.

Figure 24. Illustration of a halcyon kingfisher.

become symbolic of all gentle but persecuted beings" (Kroll 240) – an apt metaphor for Yeh-hsien. Paul W. Kroll also points out in his *The Image of the Halcyon Kingfisher in Medieval Chinese Poetry* that "the halcyon by its nature was especially liable to be linked by the poets with unusual objects of the physical world" (241); in Yeh-hsien's case, the halcyon cloak is paired with golden slippers, which would have been as extraordinary then as the glass slippers that have been immortalized by Charles Perrault's 17th century Cinderella story. These garments lend Yeh-hsien an air of rarity, wealth, virtue, and desirability, which are foundations of the persecuted heroine's identity across many cultural variations.

Though I did not exactly create a pre-Han cloak of kingfisher feathers for Yeh-hsien to wear to the cave festival, through my research I found a way to honor these elements of the story. There is still a considerable amount of Chinese costume history for me to learn, but I do think that narrowing in on a story-focused research project has been beneficial for sharpening my eye in this region of the world. My goals were to familiarize myself with Chinese clothing, and create a design that preserves the integrity of Chinese costume history as well as the Yeh-hsien story and character (fig. 25). As with any theatrical production, concept is as much a part of this design process as research. Though I used fabrics that are inherently Western in nature – I did not attempt to use only fabrics of Chinese design and origin – my aim was to use them in support of the imagery of the story, not to Westernize the look or construction of the garments (fig. 26). I was very much inspired by the ways that young Chinese people are interpreting hanfu garments, and their enthusiasm for recreating their history with contemporary materials spoke to me as a way to free my own design from direct historical reproduction.

Figure 25. Rendering of Yeh-hsien's cave festival ensemble.

Figure 26. Finished half-scale costume for Yeh-hsien.

Draped and constructed by Annie Ulrich.

KOREA: PIGLING AND HER PROUD SISTER

The Korean Cinderella's name is Pear Blossom until her father remarries, and her stepmother gives her the nickname Pigling. Pigling is forced by her stepmother and half sister Violet to do all of the housework, from starching the linens to kitchen tasks. On the day of a festival in the city, Pigling's stepmother gives her a cracked water jug that she has to fill, and a huge bag of rice to be husked before she might go to the festival. When her family leaves, Pigling weeps. Suddenly, a flock of pigeons swoops in and hulls all of the rice in no time at all. Next, Tokgabi, a "sooty black imp" (Heiner 402), appears and mends the jug with clay, then fills it with water. Her tasks completed, Pigling dresses in her "plain but clean clothes that [are] snow white" (Heiner ?) and goes to see the king's procession. The next time her family goes out, Pigling's stepmother commands her to stay back until she has dealt with all of the weeds in the garden and pulled out all of the grass in between stones leading to the house. This time, a huge black cow arrives to help Pigling, eating up all the weeds and pesky grass. The cow leads Pigling into the woods, where she feasts on incredible fruit. The stepsister, hearing of this, becomes very jealous and decides that the next time there is a chance to attend an event in town, she will instead stay behind to meet this black cow and eat this special fruit. When the gala day arrives, Pigling is allowed to go see the royal parade, and Violet follows the cow, which misleads her until she is bedraggled and dirty, her beauty destroyed. Pigling enjoys a day at the gala, where a gentleman from the south spots her, dressed again in her best clothes and looking lovely (table 2). The gentleman secures a go-between to find where Pigling lives and arrange for a betrothal. Pigling marries the gentleman, restoring her name to Pear Blossom, and lives happily with him and an earthen statue of a great black cow.

Table 2 - Essential elements of tale type ATU 510A in *Pigling* story

Motif	**This Story**
Persecuted Heroine	Stepmother/sister
Help/helper, usually magic	Sooty black imp; black cow
Meeting the prince, disguised	Wearing her best clothes, snow-white
Identification, esp. by object	Prince secures a go-between to find out where she lives and speak to the families. No specific object.
Marriage to prince	Once arrangements are made; her name is restored to Pear Blossom and she goes to live with his family in the south

In this version of the Pigling story, there are many details about clothing – but not very many about what Pigling wears to the festivals. Her father's clothes are described in detail, as part of Pigling's tasks around the house. Pigling's and her husband's wedding clothes are also described in great detail, with layers of white silk and silver details. All of these descriptions are useful, however, for placing the aesthetics of the story within the context of Korean ethnic dress. Though none of the terms for specific items of clothing were directly translated – for example, Pigling wears a "high-waisted skirt" rather than a *chima* – it is clear that her wedding ensemble maintains the silhouette of *hanbok*, or Korean ethnic dress (fig. 27). Hanbok has been around for centuries, and has changed very little in overall silhouette. The length of the jacket, or jeogori, has changed, along with other small details, but the effect has remained similar for a long time. This presented both an exciting opportunity and a challenge for me, as a researcher new to Korean clothing. The Pigling story does not indicate a particular time period, nor does it seem to require grounding in an exact time frame, especially given the longevity of hanbok. This meant that the entirety of Korean clothing history was available to me as options for Pigling's "best" clothes. These clothes are also not procured for any of the specific events, but clothing that Pigling already owns. Due to her father's status, Pigling would have had a need for nice clothes

Figure 27. Illustration of a woman wearing hanbok with full chima and short jeogori

until he married her stepmother, who treated her as a servant rather than a daughter. Unlike the wedding clothes, which in most cultures follow ceremonial guidelines of some sort, these clothes needed only to be clean and white, according to the story.

The color white has a long history in Korean clothing, which is worth noting. White has many associations, from purity and innocence to death, peace to resistance. This is no less true in Korea. The various religious traditions that influenced Korea over time, including Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, all emphasized different versions of "not-doing," repression, or a pursuit of emptiness, all of which find parallels in the color white. Additionally, "Koreans perceived white as a bright and pure color free from corruption and pollution; thus, the white clothes worn by various classes in various circumstances symbolized integrity, purity, and honesty" (Seo). For many parts of Korean history, commoners were not allowed to wear colors or dyed clothes, which relegated their wardrobes to natural neutrals that mostly have been understood as white (fig. 28).

Figure 28. Korean woman with two children, 1950s.

> This photo, taking during the Korean war, depicts a woman and her two children all dressed in white.

Higher-class citizens, like Pigling's father, might elect to wear white for their everyday clothes or scholarly robes. It makes sense, therefore, that Pigling would maintain an outfit of more pure white for special occasions, whereas the working garments she would wear for her household duties might be a more natural white, like the color of unbleached muslin. Cotton fabrics were common for these clothes, as well as ramie and rougher hemp fabrics for common people. Contemporary hanbok are rarely white, such that the formerly ubiquitous nature of white clothing in Korea now resonates as an expression of resistance. Though the idea of white clothing as resistance is not new in Korean culture, it is especially present today. This idea of resistance layers exciting additional meaning onto Pigling's clothing for the festival, since she has defied her stepmother's intentions by accepting help in her tasks. She outwardly expresses innocence and purity to the gentleman who desires to marry her, while also carrying the small secret of her own resistance. Knowing this, how could Pigling wear any other color but white?

Before starting deep historical research, I did a lot of exploration online to get a sense of the hanbok silhouette as it has been expressed both in art and fashion. Once I was mildly familiar with the overall look, it seemed like I saw hanbok everywhere – in photos of Western runway shows and random Pinterest posts that cluttered my feed. Elements of hanbok have showed up time and time again out of context, in ways so subtle that without having hanbok as a frame of reference, I never would have known. Particularly striking to me was a blazer that closed asymmetrically with a wide tie in a contrasting color (fig. 29) – innocent enough, but once I had stared at so many images of hanbok, I had to imagine that these ties were derived from *goreum*, the long ties that close the jeogori. Given that hanbok has resurged in Korea in recent years, much the way hanfu has gained cult popularity in China, interpretations of hanbok by Korean fashion designers and influences are abundant and varied. While the silhouette remains largely

Figure 29. A blazer with asymmetrical tie closure.

Once I had a basic grasp of hanbok, I couldn't help but see this as an extension of jeogori.

the same, designers have experimented with fabric, color palettes, layering, and pattern beyond what is traditional (Fig 30, 31). These variations inspired me to think beyond choosing a specific time period, and lean into the fantasy element of Pigling's story. I chose fabrics based on color and body. A traditional chima (skirt) involves many, many layers, not all of which are seen, but they are necessary for holding the shape of the skirt. Since I have been thinking about this project theatrically, as if it were for a live performance, I knew I wanted to achieve the silhouette with as few layers as possible. That meant searching for fabrics that have considerable body, without being too heavy. I also knew that I wanted a certain amount of sheerness in several of the layers for texture, but fiber content leaning more toward cotton and linen than large amounts of silk, to

create a clear differentiation between Pigling's best every day clothes and her later wedding look. This added an additional challenge and limitation to fabric shopping, but I think led to some really satisfying interest in the design. Ultimately, the skirt ended up with 3 layers over a long slip, and to add body, the draper and I decided to add a Western petticoat underneath everything. We agreed that this seemed like the kind of shortcut a theatrical process might take, whether to save money or more likely, to save a performer from the agony of wearing extreme numbers of layers. Unlike traditional hanbok, the 3 layers of the chima do not all reach to the ankle, but instead are tiered so that all of the fabrics can be seen, a design inspired by a contemporary hanbok interpretation by House of Lynn (fig. 32).

Figures 30-31. Examples of contemporary hanbok interpretations.

Figure 32. The primary inspiration for Pigling's hanbok.

Knowing that I would be working with a draper who was already investigating hanbok construction for her own research, I was able to focus on design and fabric selection for Pigling's festival clothing without getting terribly bogged down in every detail of the ensemble from the

skin out. There were advantages and disadvantages to this. I definitely felt that I learned terminology for the different pieces more slowly because I spent less time with the books that detail the specifics of hanbok. This also resulted in a feeling that perhaps I had not done enough research before completing the design. In the future, especially if I were designing many variations of hanbok for a larger number of characters, or working with drapers who have less experience of Korean clothing, I do think I would need to dive deeper into how hanbok is put on, what variations have been made for tourism rental shops' versions, and the changes over time in each layer. I have learned enough about hanbok to have a clear idea of how it is aesthetically different from other forms of ethnic dress in Asia, a feat that felt monumental at the beginning of this project, with so little insight into Asian dress. I am confident that I have created a solid base in my knowledge from which to expand this research; if I encounter Korean ethnic dress in a theatrical context, I know enough to not only begin a design process but also have conversations with drapers about the construction challenges and idiosyncrasies of hanbok. Ultimately, the design supports what the story asks for: the hanbok is snow-white, not overly fussy or ornamented, and uses natural fibers that create the silhouette of Korean ethnic dress (fig. 33, 34). While remaining true to the mandate of a snow-white ensemble, the subtle patterns and unique layering in Pear Blossom's festival garment offer her an opportunity to stand out, so that the gentleman can see her in the crowd and arrange to marry her.

Figure 33. Rendering of Pigling's gala ensemble.

Figure 34. The finished hanbok.

Patterned and constructed by Samantha Gashette.

JAPAN: BENIZARA AND KAKEZARA

In the Japanese Cinderella story, Benizara has a stepmother who favors her own daughter, Kakezara. Her stepmother sends the girls out to gather chestnuts, but gives Benizara a bag with a hole in the bottom, so it can never be full. Benizara continues trying into the night, becomes afraid and lost, and flees until she finds a house with a light on. An old woman sits within, spinning. Benizara asks if she might spend the night, but the old woman tells her it is too dangerous. Her sons are oni, or trolls, and will eat Benizara if she is there upon their return. The old woman tells Benizara how to get home, supplies her with the things she needs to escape the oni, fills her bag with chestnuts and gives her a little magic box, which has the power to give Benizara anything she needs. Benizara returns home, and just when her stepmother thinks that she must have been eaten by wolves in the night, she discovers that Benizara's bag is full of chestnuts and she cannot find fault with her.

Some time afterward, Kakezara and the stepmother are going to see a play in the village. Benizara has so much work to do that when her friends come by to ask her to go to the play, she says she cannot. Her friends help her, and the work is finished in time. Realizing that she has nothing to wear, Benizara asks the magic box for a kimono, which it grants. When she gets to the play, Kakezara is begging the stepmother for candies, and Benizara tosses some to her. A nobleman sees this exchange, and the next day, goes in search of the lovely woman who threw the candy. At first, Benizara is hidden in the bathtub, but the nobleman insists on seeing her. To prove which girl is the right one, he puts a plate on a tray, adds a pile of salt to the plate, and sticks a single pine needle in it. He asks each girl to write a poem inspired by the tableau, and Benizara's proves her sophistication and beauty (table 3). She rides off to the lord's palace, and shortly thereafter, Kakezara tumbles down into a ditch and dies.

Table 3 - Essential elements of type ATU 510A in *Benizara* story

Motif	**This Story**
Persecuted Heroine	Stepmother/sister
Help/helper, usually magic	Old woman, magic box, friends who help
Meeting the prince, disguised	Wearing a magic kimono
Identification, esp. by object	Lord asks sisters to compose a poem
Marriage to prince	Goes to live in his palace, Kakezara dies

The only inarguable clothing detail in this story is that Benizara wants a kimono to wear to the play being performed in the village. Time is only referred to as "long ago," and there are no clear indications of season other than the gathering of chestnuts, indicating fall. However, the moment for the kimono in the story is some indefinite time after the chestnut incident. In this specific instance, I actually wish there had been more clarity (figs. 35, 36). As I would confirm in my research, kimono are highly specific and codified garments. While "kimono" technically means little more than "a thing to wear," the way the word and garment are actually used today is much more limiting, and based on a lot of largely unspoken rules about fit, sleeve length, color, motif, fabric, and almost anything else that can be regulated. To misunderstand these rules, I discovered, could be catastrophic for Benizara, because it would indicate her ignorance of kimono practices and potentially reveal her lower status in society. This presented to me a particular challenge, which was increased further by my decision to make this kimono in half scale. By doing so, it became nearly impossible to simply buy a roll of specific kimono fabric to create this kimono. Instead, it became a dyeing and silk painting project, in addition to the ultimate construction of the garment. It also meant designing the silk painting – knowing that my own painting skills are nowhere near the master painters and dyers of actual handmade kimono.

Figure 35. A ukiyo-e print by Utagaway Toyokuni I, 1800.

Left: This image shows a kimono with many layers and patterns.

Figure 36. A 1920 photograph of a woman in kimono.

Right: This kimono is much simpler, and more closely related to the way kimono continue to be worn today. The many layers of older styles have given way to simpler versions.

The major advantage to the extreme codification of kimono is that extensive research and writing have already been done regarding all of its details and transformations. Like hanfu in China and hanbok in Korea, kimono has been subject to revival and reinterpretation in recent years by young women around the world. “Regardless of nationality,” says Terri Satsuik Milhaupt in her book *Kimono: A Modern History*, “these young women view the kimono as simply another form of dress…The profusion of media images on the internet enables kimono

Figures 37, 38. Examples of contemporary kimono interpretations.

enthusiasts to transcend geographical and social borders to create new styles and settings for kimono wearers…" (9) (figs. 37, 38). That Benizara so longs for a kimono, rather than already owning something that falls into this category, indicates that this story might actually not be set as far in the past as its opening "Long ago" seems to imply. Until the late 19th century, when the Japanese were encouraged to modernize by adopting western dress, kimono was simply a part of every day life for both men and women. More recently, kimono has shifted to more of a "national costume" status, worn mostly by women, and mostly for very specific occasions. This translation of *Benizara and Kakezara* was written in 1963, adding credence to this analysis – much more recently than the late 19th century translations I found for most stories, originating all over the globe. Given these circumstances, it made sense to me to set this "production" in the late 1940s – following World War II. During wartime, Japanese women had been encouraged to

set aside luxurious clothing, which gave kimono extra significance and rarity. Benizara would have been kept in rags by her stepmother anyway, and wartime directives provide a clear idea of these common clothes: Japanese women were encouraged to wear *monpe* (fig. 39) with a simple top "to show support for the nation's war efforts" (Milhaupt 191).

Figure 39. A Japanese postcard from the 1940s.

This postcard features a woman wearing *monpe*, pants that could serve as a basis for Benizara's "rags."

Once kimono regulations eased, it would make sense for Benizara to wish for such a beautiful garment. Additionally, Benizara is of a marriageable age, which is when many women are most likely to don kimono today. According to Dalby,

> Kimono embodies the characteristics deemed desirable in a Japanese bride and future wife. A willingness to sacrifice personal desires for family is a highly commendable trait in a wife. Compliance is better than independence…Wearing kimono gives an impression of the wearer as sweet, docile, and conventional – in short, a good marriage prospect. (117)

All the more reason for Benizara to covet this beautiful garment.

There are rules for how every single piece of a kimono is worn, according to age, marital status, and formality of occasion. In Benizara's case, the neckline should be set back from the neck about the width of a fist. If it sits directly against the neck, the line of the kimono is disrupted and Benizara's inexperience in wearing kimono will be obvious. But if the collar dips further back, the image is one of an erotic woman ill suited to marriage pursuits (fig. 40).

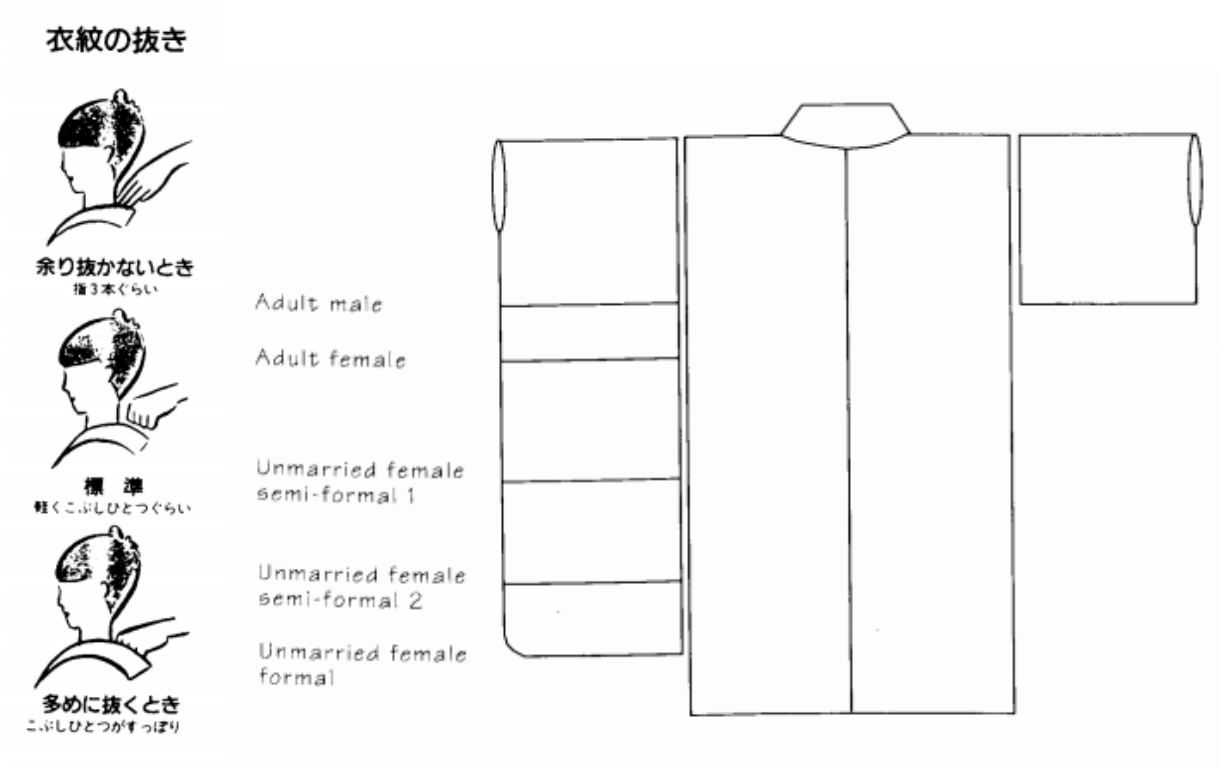

Figure 40. Drawing showing how far a kimono neckline should be set back from the neck.

Figure 41. Different sleeve lengths are appropriate for various people and occasions.

At the front, for an unmarried woman, the neckline should form a V that is wide and high. The obi should be tied high, right under the armpits, with the obi scarf quite visible and the cord wrapped somewhere in the upper third of the overall width. Because she is of an age to be seeking a husband, Benizara's sleeves should be long, rounded at the hem, and detached from the body of the kimono below her arm – this is called a *furisode* kimono. The longer the sleeves, the more formal the ensemble (fig. 41). Motifs should be concentrated around the hem and over the left shoulder, and the obi can be tied in a multitude of large, dramatic knots (fig. 42).

Figure 42. Illustrations of several elaborate obi knots.

In terms of imagery, the best that the story provides comes in the form of Benizara's poem about a lone pine tree springing from the snowy ground. In Japan's Heian period, there were many parallels between the value of women's poetic skills and her choices of outfit. By observing the rules of each in nuanced ways, a woman could advertise her sophistication and sensibilities (Dalby 224). In this period, when colors and motifs of women's clothing were perhaps the most strictly regulated, a color palette of scarlet-pink and green was known as pine (fig. 43).

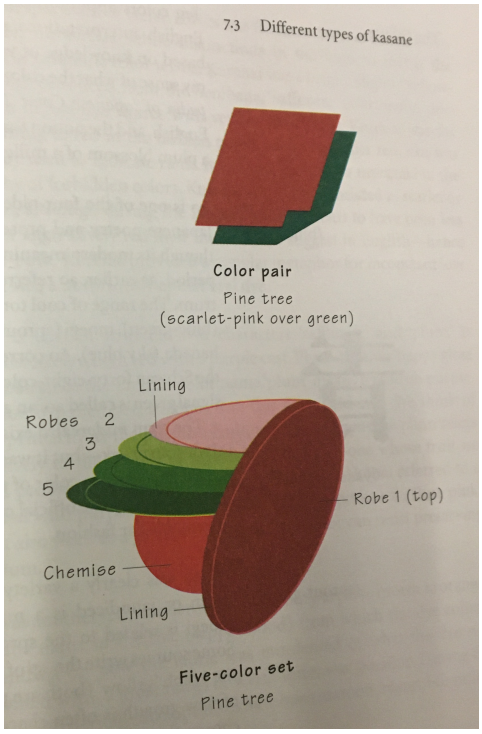

Figure 43. Heian period "pine" color combination.

A Heian ensemble would have consisted of several layers, with shades of green on the outermost layers and scarlet-pink as the linings (which were also visible) (Dalby 231). I chose to honor this color palette for Benizara's kimono, but inverted it to put the green on the inside as in the simpler two-color version (top half of fig. 43). I made an ombre of the scarlet pink, so that the various shades would still appear, but without the many, many layers of a Heian ensemble.

The pine tree is often used on formal kimonos, and symbolizes virtue, youth, and strength– all qualities that Benizara possesses. It is also a Japanese New Year symbol that speaks to bright futures and renewal.

Inspired by a kimono owned by the Metropolitan Museum of art, dated to the second quarter of the 20th century, I decided to paint a pine motif at the hem of the kimono (figs. 44, 45). Seasons are also important in choosing kimono motifs, colors, and fabrics. Pine is a winter motif, and winter is the time for bright colors. Fabrics should be heavier in winter. In the case of this kimono, I also had to consider how the weight of the fabric would affect the reduced scale of the garment. I chose a lighter weight silk crepe for the half scale kimono than I might have for a full scale one, which likely would be made of thicker 4-ply silk crepe.

Figure 44. Metropolitan Museum of Art kimono that inspired Benizara's design.

Figure 45. Example of a pine tree in Japanese art.

Obi should contrast the colors and motifs in the kimono, rather than match them – one would not use a pine motif in both pieces. Benizara's obi is tied in the sparrow knot (fig. 46), which contrasts the freedom of soaring through the air with the grounded immovability of the pine tree. The obi is made of lavender and gold brocade in a geometric floral motif, contrasting both the colors of the kimono and its decorative themes (figs. 47-49).

Figure 46. Sparrow obi knot.

In the end, *Benizara and Kakezara* is as much a fantasy piece as the other stories I explored. However, the sheer volume of rules that exist for Japanese dress is so large, that it felt important to try and follow a majority of them. I am certain that I made missteps along the way – just going back to my notes now, I realized that on an unmarried woman's kimono, the pine motif should have extend up above the obi, over the left shoulder. Realistically, the furisode should also be much more heavily patterned and quite colorful, according to modern young women's wearing of them. I have not seen a direct precedent for an ombre dye effect in kimono,

though the one that inspired me most directly did have a paler section at the hem. There is so much to learn about Japanese dress, that even after fully reading several books, taking copious notes, and making a kimono in miniature, the amount that I have yet to learn is daunting. I have not touched menswear, and have barely dipped into the specifics of different time periods or how sumptuary laws have influenced Japanese dress over time. I have gained, however, significant insight into Japanese sensibilities about their ethnic dress that are invaluable to my ability to design Japanese characters. A production of a Japanese story would take significant continued research – but I have a sense of where to start.

Figure 47. Rendering of Benizara's kimono.

Figure 48. Finished half scale kimono for Benizara.

Figure 49. Back view of kimono with sparrow obi knot.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

When I began this research process, I had a long list of questions and no answers. Now that I am at the end, I find that though some of the questions have changed, the list is not really shorter. Nor do I have concrete answers to the questions I started out with. Every topic I wanted to address in this project is complex - each is enough to occupy a lifetime of research. However, I have developed new ways of thinking that will continue to shape my artistic work and the way I approach costume design.

Some of the greatest strides I have made in the course of this project regard my relationship to "authenticity." My background as an undergraduate urged total accuracy in historical costume designs that allowed very little room for expansive interpretation. I assumed that creating authenticity on stage in a cultural context must take this form, as well. More recently, I have recognized in period costume that interpretation is always influenced by the designer's point of view, and this process set out to determine how I could responsibly interpret garments from cultures that are not my own. Two new goals replaced my striving for authenticity: understanding and integrity. By laboring to recognize the significance of a garment in its original context, working to understand color, shape, and symbolism that are new to me, I position myself as close as I can ever be to an understanding of how that garment functions in its culture. Once I understand, I can interpret – always with the goal of maintaining the integrity of those original meanings and contexts. Almost no culture is completely protected from outside influence in the 21st century; just as I cannot interpret from any perspective other than my own, the clothing of these cultures cannot be completely shielded from outside influences. These garments are not static. They continue to shift and change and acquire new meaning within their own contexts and beyond them, where the world can access their beauty via the internet or travel

or by going to see a play. Though I did not know it when I started, it became very important to me that my interpretation be supported by the way designers *within* each of these cultural contexts continue to interpret the design of these garments. Besides gaining contextual understanding of a garment, as described above, other meanings of understanding−empathy, or acceptance−are also at play. It is a personally held belief that communal events like theatrical performance have the power to inspire empathy in their audiences. By exercising my position on design teams to produce work with contextual integrity, it is my hope that the audience experiences gains in their understanding as well.

Another unexpected, unsought result of this project is that I have more tools at my disposal for understanding what I see on fashion runways. Frequently, my contemporary or mixed-period costume research is heavily influenced by runway fashion shows, photos of which are easy to access online. However, until now, the only vocabulary I had for analyzing fashion came from Western fashion history. Since embarking on this project, I am able to see more of what has inspired fashion designers in creating their couture collections. There is often debate surrounding these garments–it is outside the purview of this paper–but I now find myself in a better position to understand the choices I am making when I take inspiration from fashion design. As I broaden this research, I am certain that I will continue to expand my comprehension of high fashion designs.

Regarding my own costume design process, I have discovered that it remains mostly the same when I am designing characters outside of my own cultural context. However, at the start of this process, I could not have articulated what my core values as a costume designer actually were. I discovered through this research that regardless of time and place, my responsibility is to the story, the character, and the context. Certainly, the research must be more rigorous when I do

not have prior knowledge of the context. But I found that there is so much hybridity in cultural identities, by default, that there is room for interpretation as long as the character is being expressed and the story is being told in a way that honors the given context. Flexibility is also key – being prepared to make a change when new information becomes available or enters my awareness. I had painted Pigling's shoes red, but later came to understand that they should be white or light blue. A collaborator included a center back seam on Yeh-hsien's garments for practical reasons, and now I know this is integral to Han Chinese design and not to omit it in the future. I made a mistake in designing the painting on Benizara's kimono, and in the future I know to dig deeper before doing so again.

In recognizing these "blips," I see success, not failure. There was never a moment when a Master of Fine Arts degree meant that I would know everything there is to know about costume design. Instead, these three years have taught me how to *find* what I need to know, how to *interpret* it, and how to correct for mistakes. This project clarified those processes for me, and to be able to see some of my mistakes already, in a project that is not yet truly finished, speaks to success. It has also taught me to receive criticism gracefully, and to deeply consider it. A respondent to my website presentation of this project has asked me to continue to interrogate some of the vocabulary I have used in my descriptions. While this makes my perfectionist heart race, I can see that this is largely what I was trying to achieve – I have opened up a conversation. It is one in which I still feel under-qualified to participate, given my identity coordinates in relation to the subject matter. However, if I am invited to the party, I am happy to show up and listen. I hope, moving forward, that this commitment to research, to putting something out there and really listening to the conversation that follows, becomes a model for others in their artistic

practice. By setting my ego aside, as well as my fear, I can continue to grow and expand my own knowledge and offer back to the audience something that feels honest, earnest, and vital.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

China: Yeh-hsien

The story of Yeh-hsien, also known as Yeh-Shen and Sheh Hsien, is the oldest known Cinderella tale recorded in the Orient. It appears in *Yu Yang Tsa Tsu (Miscellany of Forgotten Lore)* written by Tuan Ch'êng-shih around 856-860 AD/CE. A full English translation of the tale appears in two sources, "Cinderella in China" by R. D. Jameson and "The Chinese Cinderella Story" by Arthur Waley, although neither were available for reprinting here. Waley's translation and commentary are generally considered to be more accurate. I have retold the tale, deriving the story from both translations of the old text. The story has also been retold and embellished by Ai-Ling Louie in a picture book, Yeh-Shen (1982), and illustrated by Ed Young.

LONG before the Ch'in and Han Dynasties, there lived in southern China a cave chief named Wu and his cave was named for him. Wu had married two wives, but after presenting him with a daughter named Yeh-hsien, one wife died. Yeh-hsien was a very intelligent child and was clever at making pottery.[1] Her father loved her dearly.

After a few years, her father died and she was mistreated by her stepmother, who forced her to gather firewood in dangerous places and draw water from deep wells. Once she caught a

[1] Jameson posits that Yeh-hsien's special skill is "sifting gold," but Waley's translation is more reliable. Waley, however, is also puzzled by the pottery reference since pottery making was not known as women's art in this time and region.

fish about two inches long with red fins and golden eyes. She kept it in a bowl of water where it grew bigger and bigger every day. She changed out the bowl of water for a larger one many times, but it eventually grew too big for any vessel to hold it, so she released it into the pond [i]behind their home. She threw the leftover scraps from their meals into the water to feed it.

When the girl visited the pond, the fish would pillow its head on the bank to greet her, but it would not appear when anyone else came. The stepmother knew about this, and despite waiting and watching many times, the fish never came into view. So she decided to trick the girl and said, "how hard you have worked! Let me give you a new dress."[2] She then had the girl change out of her worn clothes before sending her to draw water from a spring several hundred *li*[3] away instead of the spring she used every day.

Afterwards, the stepmother donned her stepdaughter's clothes, hid a sharp knife up her sleeve, and went to the pond where she summoned the fish. When the fish raised itself out of the water, she promptly chopped off its head and killed it. The fish by this time was more than ten feet long.[4] She cooked it and it tasted twice as delicious as any ordinary fish. Then she buried its bones under the dunghill.

The next day Yeh-hsien went to the pond but the fish did not appear. She was weeping in the fields when suddenly a man with messy hair and dressed in tattered clothes descended from the heavens. He consoled her, saying, "Do not weep. Your stepmother has killed your fish and its bones are under the dunghill. Go back, gather the fish's bones, and hide them in your room. Whenever you need something, pray to them and your prayers will be answered." Yeh-hsien

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[2] Jameson translates the phrase as "wash your dress" instead which makes more sense with a greedy stepmother.
[3] A *li* is a traditional Chinese unit of distance that has been standardized to a length of 500 meters in modern times, but has varied over time. Waley chose to translate it as a "league," an outdated measurement considered to be the distance a person or a horse could walk in an hour.
[4] Jameson translates five feet while Whaley translates ten feet.

followed his advice and provided herself with gold, pearls, dresses, and food as soon as she wished for them.

When the cave festival time arrived, the stepmother went, leaving the girl to tend the fruit trees in the garden. Yeh-hsien waited until her stepmother was far away and then dressed herself in her finest raiment, a cloak made of kingfisher feathers and golden shoes, before heading to the festival herself.

Her stepsister stared at her and said to her mother, "That girl looks very much like my sister." The stepmother was suspicious, too. Yeh-hsien noticed this so she hurried away, losing a shoe as she fled, which was picked up by one of the cave people. When the stepmother returned home, she discovered the girl sleeping in the garden with her arms wrapped around one of the fruit trees, so she thought nothing more of the finely dressed lady.

The cave was near an island in the sea and on that island there was the kingdom of T'o Han. The kingdom had great military power and was the mightiest of more than thirty islands. Its coastline measured several thousand *li* in length. One of the cave people sold the golden shoe within that kingdom and eventually the king acquired it. He had his subjects try it on their feet but the shoe was an inch too short for even the smallest foot among them. Then he ordered all the women in the kingdom to try it but it fit no one. It was as light as a feather and made no noise when walking on stone.

The T'o Han king was convinced the cave man had stolen the shoe, so he had him imprisoned and tortured, but still did not learn from whence the shoe had come. He put the shoe down by the roadside and sent his people to search everyone's houses. Eventually a shoe with

the same pattern was found in Yeh-hsien's home.[5] Intrigued, the king searched the inner chambers until he found Yeh-hsien. He asked her to try on the shoe. So Yeh-hsien dressed herself in her finest cloak of halcyon feathers, put on the shoes, and presented herself to the king. She was as beautiful as a heavenly goddess. She married the king and took the fish bones back with them to his kingdom.

Not long after, the stepmother and stepsister were struck and killed by flying stones. The cave people, having pity on them, buried them in a stone pit which they named the Tomb of Regretful Women. The cave people considered it a shrine to matchmaking for any prayer for a marriage match offered there was answered.

After returning to his kingdom, the king of T'o Han made Yeh-hsien his chief wife. During that first year, he greedily requested jewels and jades without end from the fish bones, so the next year the bones delivered no more treasures. The king buried the fish bones on the seashore and covered them with a hundred bushels of pearls in a gold shell.

Much later there was a mutiny among some conscripted soldiers and a general opened the cache to distribute better provisions to his army, but in the night all of it was washed away by the tide.

[5] Waley states, "Something here seems to have gone slightly wrong with the text." His translation includes a search for the shoe with anyone owning a woman's shoe being arrested. It is unclear what makes him search Yeh-hsien's home. Since the events are incongruous to the story, I have relied on Jameson's text for this small section although it may be less accurate.

Notes

The story was provided by Li Shih-yüan, a longtime servant to Tuan Ch'êng-shih's family. He originally came from the caves of Yung-Chou and remembered many strange tales from the southern region.

Source: © 2012 "Yeh-hsien" retold and adapted by Heidi Anne Heiner.

Resources consulted for this adaptation:

Jameson, R.D. "Cinderella in China*." Three Lectures on Chinese Folklore*. Peking: North China Union Language School, 1932. Pp. 47-85. Reprinted in Dundes, *Cinderella: A Casebook* (pp.71-97).

Louie, Ai-Ling. *Yeh-Shen*. New York: Puffin Books, 1982.

Waley, Arthur. "The Chinese Cinderella Story." *Folk-Lore*. Vol. 58, No. 1 (Mar. 1947), pp. 226-238.

APPENDIX B

Korea: Pigling and Her Proud Sister

PEAR BLOSSOM had been the name of a little Korean maid who was suddenly left motherless. When her father, Kang W, who was a magistrate high in office, married again, he took for his wife a proud widow whose daughter, born to Kang Wa, was named Violet. Mother and daughter hated housework and made Pear Blossom clean the rice, cook the food and attend to the fire in the kitchen. They were hateful in their treatment of Pear Blossom, and, besides never speaking a kind word, called her Pigling, or Little Pig, which made the girl weep often.

It did no good to complain to her father, for he was always busy. He smoked his yard-long pipe and played checkers hour by hour, apparently caring more about having his great white coat properly starched and lustred than for his daughter to be happy. His linen had to be beaten with a laundry club until it glistened like hoar frost, and, except his wide-brimmed black horsehair hat, he looked immaculately white when he went out of the house to the Government office.

Poor Pigling had to perform this task of washing, starching and glossing, in addition to the kitchen work and the rat-tat-tat of her laundry stick was often heard in the outer room till after midnight, when her heartless stepsister and mother had long been asleep.

There was to be a great festival in the city and for many days preparations were made in the house to get the father ready in his best robe and hat, and the women in their finery, to go out and see the king and the royal procession.

Poor Pigling wanted very much to have a look at the pageant, but the cruel stepmother, setting before her a huge straw bag of unhulled rice and a big cracked water jar, told her she must

husk all the rice, and, drawing water from the well, fill the crock to the brim before she dared to go out on the street.

What a task to hull with her fingers three bushels of rice and fill up a leaky vessel! Pigling wept bitterly. How could it ever be done?

While she was brooding thus and opening the straw bag to begin spreading the rice out on mats, she heard a whir and a rush of wings and down came a flock of pigeons. They first lighted on her head and shoulders, and then hopping to the floor began diligently, with beak and claw, and in a few minutes the rice lay in a heap, clean, white, and glistening, while with their pink toes they pulled away the hulls and put these in a separate pile.

Then, after a great chattering and cooing, the flock was off and away.

Pigling was so amazed at this wonderful work of the birds that she scarcely knew how to be thankful enough. But, alas, there was still the cracked crock to be filled. Just as she took hold of the bucket to begin, there crawled out of the fire hole a sooty black imp, named Tokgabi.

"Don't cry," he squeaked out. "I'll mend the broken part and fill the big jar for you." Forthwith, he stopped up the crack with clay, and pouring a dozen buckets of water from the well into the crock, it was filled to brimming and the water spilled over on all sides. Then Tokgabi the imp bowed and crawled into the flues again, before the astonished girl could thank her helper.

So Pigling had time to dress in her plain but clean clothes that were snow-white. She went off and saw the royal banners and the king's grand procession of thousands of loyal men.

The next time, the stepmother and her favorite daughter planned a picnic on the mountain. So the refreshments were prepared and Pigling had to work hard in starching the dresses to be worn – jackets, long skirts, belts, sashes, and what not, until she nearly dropped with fatigue. Yet instead of thanking and cheering her, the cruel stepmother told Pigling she must

not go out until she had hoed all the weeds in the garden and pulled up all the grass between the stones of the walk.

Again the poor girl's face was wet with tears. She was left at home alone, while the other went off in fine clothes, with plenty to eat and drink, for a day of merrymaking.

While weeping thus, a huge black cow came along and out of its great liquid eyes seemed to beam compassion upon the kitchen slave. Then, in ten mouthfuls, the animal ate up the weeds, and, between its hoof and lips, soon made an end of the grass in the stone pathway.

With her tears dried Pigling followed this wonderful brute out over the meadows into the woods, where she found the most delicious fruit her eyes ever rested upon. She tasted and enjoyed, feasting to the full and then returned home.

When the jealous stepsister heard of the astonishing doings of the black cow, she determined to enjoy a feast in the forest also. So on the next gala-day she stayed home and let the kitchen drudge go to see the royal parade. Pigling could not understand why she was excused, even for a few hours, from the pots and kettles, but she was still more surprised by the gift from her stepmother of a rope of cash to spend for dainties. Gratefully thanking the woman, she put on her best clothes and was soon on the main street of the city enjoying the gay sights and looking at the happy people. There were tight rope dancing, music with drum and flute by bands of strolling players, tricks by conjurers and mountebanks, with mimicking and castanets, posturing by the singing girls and fun of all sorts. Boys peddling honey candy, barley sugar and sweetmeats were out by the dozen. At the eating-house, Pigling had a good dinner of fried fish, boiled rice with red peppers, turnips, dried persimmons, roasted chestnuts and candied orange, and felt as happy as a queen.

The selfish stepsister had stayed home, not to relieve Pigling of work, but to see the wonderful cow. So, when the black animal appeared and found its friend gone and with nothing to do, it went off into the forest.

The stepsister at once followed in the tracks of the cow that took it into its head to go very fast, and into unpleasant places. Soon the girl found herself in a swamp, wet, miry and full of brambles. Still hoping for wonderful fruit, she kept on until she was tired out and the cow was no longer to be seen. Then, muddy and bedraggled, she tried to go back, but the thorny bushes tore her clothes, spoiled her hands and so scratched her face that when at last, nearly dead, she got home, she was in rags and her beauty was gone.

But Pigling, rosy and round, looked so lovely that a young man from the south, of good family and at that time visiting the capital, was struck with her beauty. And as he wanted a wife, he immediately sought to find out where she lived. Then he secured a go-between who visited both families and made all the arrangements for the betrothal and marriage.

Grand was the wedding. The groom, Su-wen, was dressed in white and black silk robes, with a rich horsehair cap and head-dress denoting his rank as a Yang-ban, or gentleman. On his breast, crossed by a silver-studded girdle, was a golden square embroidered with flying cranes rising above waves – the symbols of civil office. He was tall, handsome, richly cultured, and quite famous as a writer of verses, besides being well read in the classics.

Charming, indeed, looked Pear Blossom, in her robe of brocade, and long undersleeves which extended from her inner dress of snow-white silk. Dainty were her red kid shoes curved upward at the toes. With a baldric of open-worked silver, a high-waisted long skirt, with several linings of her inner silk robes showing prettily at the neck, and the silver bridal ring on her finger, she looked as lovely as a princess. She wore a lofty headdress of silk velvet decorated

with tinsel and flowers, which were inwoven with her own long black tresses, while on her forehead was the crimson disk or spot denoting the bride. Long silver hairpins, tipped with jade, completed her headgear.

The chief ornament of the bridal festival and symbol of undying love was that of a real, live goose. The wild geese, that soar in the sky, pluck pine branches from the north and carry them as tokens of return again to the far south. Graceful in flight, unwearied of wing, soaring high in the air above all danger of hunger, snare, trap, or arrow, the wild goose is the emblem of constancy since it never seeks but one mate, and, losing that, takes none again. The snow-white wild goose is the pattern of marital value and the symbol of constancy in love.

So with her original name now restored, and henceforward called Ewa, or Pear Blossom, the daughter of Kang Wa was to be Mrs. Su-wen. It was astonishing what new interest the hitherto neglectful father took in his daughter as soon as she was sought for in marriage.

Leaving her home in a palanquin borne by four lusty bearers, Pear Blossom went forth to live amid the rich rice fields of a southern province. Her home was with a father and mother-in-law, who, having no other children but their one son, became very fond of their new daughter. Summer after summer the pear trees bloomed and Ewa, the Pear Blossom, lived ever happily. As a good wife, she fulfilled in her life the significance of the symbol of marital bliss the figure of the wild goose, which flies far in the heavens, graceful and untiring, the mirror of loyalty and faithfulness and, from of old, reputed to have but one mate.

Besides her bridal dower, her father asked Pear Blossom what she preferred as a special present. When she told him, he laughed heartily, even until his eyes, like two old roof-spouts, leaked with tears. Nevertheless he fulfilled her wishes and to this day, in the boudoir of Pear Blossom, now Mrs. Su-wen, there stands ever, before the good wife and happy mother of sons,

an earthen figure of a black cow moulded and baked from the clay of her home province, while under a pear tree that bursts into bloom every spring time and sheds on the ground a snowy shower that falls not from the skies, happy children play.

Source: Griffis, William Elliot. *The Unmannerly Tiger and Other Korean Tales.* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1911.

APPENDIX C

Japan: Benizara and Kakezara

LONG ago in a certain place there were two sisters. One was named Benizara, 'Crimson Dish' and the other Kakezara, 'Broken Dish.' Benizara was a former wife's child, while Kakezara was the stepmother's child. Benizara was a very honest and gentle girl, but her stepmother was very cruel to her.

One day she sent the two girls out to gather chestnuts. She gave Benizara a bag with a hole in the bottom, but she gave Kakezara a good one. "You must not come back until you have each filled your bag," she said.

The two set off for the mountains and began to pick up chestnuts. Before long Kakezara's bag was full, and she returned home, leaving Benizara alone. Benizara was an honest girl, and so she worked as hard as she could picking up chestnuts until it began to get dark. It got darker and darker, and she thought she heard a rustling sound, *gasa gasa*, as though a wolf were coming toward her. She suddenly realized how dangerous it was and ran off without even looking where she was going. In the meantime, it had become very dark, and she was completely lost. She was filled with despair, but she knew that it would do no good to cry; so she kept on walking, thinking that perhaps she might find a house. Suddenly just ahead she saw a light. She went to where it was and found an old woman alone spinning thread. Benizara explained that she had gone to gather chestnuts but that it was late and she couldn't return home. Then she asked if she might please stay overnight there.

The old woman said: “I would like to let you stay here, but both my sons are *oni*. They will soon be coming home and would eat up anyone they found here. Instead, I will tell you how to find your way home.” And she carefully explained which road to take. Then she filled the bag with chestnuts and gave her a little box and a handful of rice. “Take the chestnuts to your mother. This little box is a magic box; if there is ever anything that you need, just say what you would like, then tap on the box three times and what you want will appear. Now if you meet my *oni* sons on your way home, chew some of the rice and spread it around your mouth; then lie down and pretend that you are dead.”

Benizara thanked her for everything and started for home on the road she had been told to take. After a while she heard the sound of a flute coming toward her. She chewed some of the rice and spread it around her mouth, then lay down by the side of the road and pretended that she was dead. Soon a red *oni* and a blue *oni* came along. “Hey, older brother, I smell human beings,” said one and went over to the side of the road to look. “It’s no good, older brother, she’s already rotten. Her mouth is full of worms,” he said. And they went on down the road blowing their flutes.

Benizara listened to the sound of the flutes growing fainter and fainter in the distance; then she continued on down the road that she had been told to take.

Soon morning came. At home her stepmother was thinking to herself that during the night the wolves would have surely eaten Benizara, when just then the girl arrived home. Far from being dead, she had a whole bag full of chestnuts; so the stepmother had nothing to scold her about.

One day some time after this a play was to be given in the village. The stepmother took Kakezara and went to see it, giving a great deal of work which had to be done before they

returned home. Benizara was working as hard as she could, when some of her friends came and asked her to go with them to see the play. Benizara said that her stepmother had given her so much work to do that she could not go, but her friends said, “We will help you and then you can go,” and so, all working together, they soon finished a whole day’s work.

Her friends were all wearing beautiful kimonos, but Benizara had nothing but rags to wear. She wondered what she should do; then she thought about the little box she had received from the old woman in the mountains. She took it out and said that she would like to have a kimono. She was given a beautiful kimono. She put it on and went to see the play. When she got there, Kakezara was begging her mother for some candies and Benizara threw her some. When she did this, a nobleman who had come to see the performance of the play saw what happened.

The next day the nobleman’s colorful procession came to the village. The lord’s palanquin stopped in front of Benizara’s house. Kakezara’s mother was overjoyed and dressed Kakezara in her very best to meet him. The lord got out of the palanquin and said, “There should be two girls here; bring out the other one too.”

The stepmother had put Benizara in the bathtub to hide her, but there was nothing she could do but obey the lord’s command and so she brought her out. In comparison with Kakezara, Benizara looked very shabby, but the lord said, “Which one of these two came to see the performance of the play yesterday?”

“It was this one, Kakezara.”

“No, it wasn’t that one,” said the lord, but the mother kept insisting that it was. Finally it was decided to ask each of them to compose a song. The lord took a plate and put it on a tray; then he piled some salt in the plate and stuck a pine needle in it. He commanded that they each compose a poem, using that as a subject.

In a loud voice Kakezara sang,

Put a plate on a tray,
Put some salt on the plate,
Stick a pine needle in the salt;
It'll soon fall over.

Then she hit the lord on the head and ran off. Next Benizara sang,

A tray and plate, oh!
A mountain rises from the plate,
On it, snow has fallen.
Rooted deep into the snow,
A lonely pine tree grows.

When he heard this song, the lord praised it very highly. Preparations were soon made, and Benizara was put into a beautiful palanquin; then she rode off to the lord's palace.

Kakezara's mother watched in silence; then she put Kakezara in a huge empty basket, saying, "Now, Kakezara, you too may go to the lord's palace." She dragged her along, but she did it so violently that Kakezara tumbled over the edge of a deep ditch and fell to her death.

Source: Seki, Keigo, ed. Folktales of Japan. Robert J. Adams, translator. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963.

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